

**THIRTIE FOVRE SPECIAL**  
**and chosen Sermons of Dr. Martin**  
**Luthers. Discovering most clearly, excel-**  
**lently, and evidently to every ordinary capacity or**  
**understanding : the difference betwixt faith and workes,**  
**law and Gospel, the Christian and Creature Operations,**  
**Troubles and Consolations, and the best way to make**  
**Christians, keep them so, and in case of Relapses to reco-**  
**ver them again by Christ the onely Cure of all soule**  
**maladies. Englished by William Gace, and printed, 1581.**

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*Revel. 4. 5. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voyces: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the Throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.*

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*Revel. 5. 11. 10 14. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many Angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the Elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.*

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*Saying with a loud voice, Wor thy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*

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*And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, honour, glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*

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*Psal. 29. 3. 4. The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth, the Lord is upon many waters. The voice of the Lord is powerfull. the voice of the Lord is full of Majesty.*

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*Joh. 29. 3. 4. When his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness. As I was in the dayes of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle:*

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*London, Printed by Tho. Paine, and are to be sold by Francis Gyron at the three Daggers at Temple-Barre. 1649.*

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THEIR HIGH ROYALTY

and noble Serenities of the Most

Illustrious Prince of Wales, and

the Princess of Wales, their

Highnesses the Duke and Duchess

of Cornwall, and the Duke and

Duchess of Gloucester, and

the Duke and Duchess of

York, and the Duke and

Duchess of Devonshire, and

the Duke and Duchess of

Northumberland, and the

Duke and Duchess of

Bedford, and the Duke and

Duchess of Buckingham, and

the Duke and Duchess of

Gloucester, and the Duke and

Duchess of Devonshire, and

the Duke and Duchess of

Northumberland, and the

Duke and Duchess of

Bedford, and the Duke and

Duchess of Buckingham, and

the Duke and Duchess of

Gloucester, and the Duke and

SOME GLIMPSES OF THE HYROIQUE, GRACIOUS, AND  
GALLANT SPIRIT OF LUTHER.

**L**uther (saith Malancton) is a miracle amongst men. Another saith. That there was never any more trusty servant to his Master, never any of more undaunted courage in his masters cause. Never any that adventured, or durst adventure farther: Never any that used more constancy, magnanimitie and force in battering the Fortresses of the enemy: Never any that pierced deeper, prevailed farther, and procured larger for the safety of poore Christians, so many hundred years, oppressed, imprisoned, impoverished, yoked, and chained in miserable Captivity, through the monstrous outrage of the execrable Nimrod of Rome than Luther. He had the enjoyments of God (by his spirit) in his bosome, and was carried on, (though mightily opposed) to doe good to the Church and State, in that age wherein he lived, by imparting what he had received, from that al powerful spirit which did reveale the hidden mysteries and deep things of God to him abundantly, and yet did not content himself with so doing, & like these of Ruben, Manassah and Gad beyond Jordan. (Iosua 22. 21. 30.) But was so carried on (by the same spirit) that he sought the good of posterities to come, and succeeding ages will have cause (as we have) to praise God for his (labour of love and) workes extant. Wherein wee may solace our selves as he did. Who since Pauls death spake and wrote so of God, Christ, Christians, the Law, Gospel, Faith and Love, Grace and Works, setting them in their proper place, in Conversation amongst men, on this side Jesus Christ. As Luther hath? Never man or woman that read Luther, but it pierced their hearts, and lefte behind a deep impression in their minds, to the quietting of their perplexed, troubled, and distressed Consciences if they were Christians. (Oh! what ease of heart, refreshings, and unpeackable delights have they had?) But a wonderfull sting in the Consciences of the wicked, especially if they were brought up Antichristian. For they can't abide to heare, that al the glory of our salvation should be given to God and Christ alone. And that Christians should have their joy, peace, and consolation from a sure foundation, Gods love in Christ Jesus, whom Luther by the evident demonstration of the spirit hath most manifestly laid down for salvation. And for good workes, none ever prest them more upon men for conversation so exactly, and according to the spirituall meaning of the Law, then Luther hath. And there is more solid divinity in one lease of Luthers workes, then in many prolix Treatises extant. O what voices doth he utter? What light doth hee hold forth? What spirituall Maiesty, glory and power is there in's expressions? What heavenly doctrine doth he preach? What spirituall consolations doth he propound? What great, profound, and continuall exercises, practise, and experience of inward conflicts, agonies, and straits of conscience had he? What fights with Satana, the Flesh, the

World, the Law, against sin, death, and all the infernall powers of Hell had he? What Contemplations of Christ, Grace, Iustification, and faith had he? Yea, and his phraise and eloquence of speech dorth discover so much holy pride, and hight of spirit, in the discovery of the inestimable, free, perfect, and permanent love of God the Father, the admirable glory, durable riches, and everlasting Kingdome ordained for Saints elected, & purchased by Christ, yet salvation's free to us, though it cost Christ full deare, all applyed by faith, that maketh the Nativity, Conception, Bitth, Thoughts, words, workes, life, death, Resurrection, Assention, mediation or intercession of Christ ours, and this the spirit revealeth, and faith scaleth up our salvation to us, and brings it home to the Conscience, and assureth us that the conquest of Christ over sin, death, and hell is ours, and that satisfaction to the Law made by Christ, whereby he hath pacified the wrath of God felt in our Consciences, so that all feares and terrors are removed, and conscience discharged as if it had never been stung by sinne, that biting Serpent, the jawes of Hell so broken, death so vanquished, the teeth of the Law so beaten out, that they can bite us no more, shut us up prisoners no more, neither hurt the poorest Christian once freed, clothed, and heal'd by Christ, and injoying him by faith, how gastly, strong, and terrible soever they appeare to sence, reason, or incredulity that lyeth hid in our nature, like the Vipers teeth under his gums, and to too oftentimes breaks forth to our great disturbance. In all these feats of spirituall Activity, and soule victories, he's much rather to be wondred at then praised, by sacred faith, so highly was he raised, as may appeare in some few Instances following, collected out of his workes. When the Law would trouble the conscience and rule there, and disturb the Christians sweet inioyment of Christ. Thus saith he, O Law, thou mighty Queen, and cruell Regent of all mankind, what have I done, that thou hast accused me, terrified me, and condemned me, which am innocent? O Law thou hast no power over me, and therefore thou doest accuse and condemne me in vaine, for I beleve in the sonne of God, whom the father hath sent into the world, to redeem us miserable sinners, oppressed with the tyranny of the Law. He gave his life, and shed his blood for me. Therefore feeling thy terrors and threatnings, O Law, I plunge my conscience in the wounds, blood, death, resurrection, and victory of my Saviour Christ. Besides him I will see nothing, I will heare nothing. O Law, thou wouldest climbe up into the Kingdom of my conscience, and there raig and reprove it if sinne, and wouldest take from me the ioy of my heart which I have by faith in Christ, and drive me to desperation, that I might be without all hope, and utterly perish. This thou doest besides thy office: keep thy self within thy bounds, and exercise thy power upon the flesh, but touch not my conscience, for I am baptized, and by the Gospel, am called to the partaking

partaking of righteousness and everlasting life, to the Kingdom of Christ, wherein my conscience is at rest, where no Law is, but altogether forgiveness of sins, peace, quietness, joy, health, and everlasting life. Trouble me not in these matters, for I will not suffer thee so intolerable a Tyrant, and cruell tormentor, to raige in my conscience: for it is the seat and temple of Christ the sonne of God, who is the King of righteousness and peace, and my most sweet Saviour and Mediatour: He shall keep my conscience joyfull and quiet in the sound and pure doctrine of the Gospel, and in the knowledge of this Christian and heavenly righteousness, in that righteousness and life I have no sinne, no care, no sting of conscience, no feare of death. O Law, thy tyranny can have no place in the throne where Christ my Lord sitteth: there I cannot heare thee, for I am free, and a sonne, who must not be subiect to any bondage or Law. Therefore when Christ is come, we ought to know nothing of the Law, unlesse it be in this respect, that it hath power and dominion over the flesh, to bridle and keep it under. But when the Law cometh to trouble thy conscience, thou must say, Lady Law, thou comest not in season, for thou comest too soon, tarry yet untill 430 yeares be expired, and when they are past, then come and spare not. But if thou com'st then, yet shalt thou come too late. For then hath the promise prevented thee 430 yeares: to the which I assent, and sweetly repose my self in the same. Therefore I have nothing to do with thee: I heare thee not, for I live in Christ who hath abolished thee O Law! O Law, that thou accusest me and sayest, that I have committed many sins? Indeed I grant that I have committed many finnes, yea, and yet do still commit finnes daily without number. This toucheth me nothing: I am now deafe and cannot heare: therefore thou talkest to me in vaine, for I am dead unto thee. But if thou wilt needs dispute with me as touching my finnes, get thee to my flesh and members, crucifie them, but trouble not me, nor my conscience. I say which am a Lady and a Queen, and have nothing to doe with thee, for I am dead to thee, and now I live to Christ, with whom I am under another Law, to wit, the Law of grace, which ruleth over sinne and the Law. Therefore the Law cannot accuse or condemne those that beleve on Christ. Gal. 5. 23. pag. 274. Indeed the Law troubleth and terrifieth our consciences, but Christ apprehended by faith, vanquisheth it with all his terrors and threatnings. To them therefore the Law is utterly abolished, and hath no more power to accuse them: For they doe that of their own accord which the Law requireth. Christ apprehended by faith, secretly by his spirit faith thus to the soule distressed. Do'st thou see nothing but the Law, sin, terror, heaviness, desperation, death, hell and the Devill? Is there not also grace, remission of sinne, righteousness, consolation, joy, peace, life, heaven, Christ, and God? Trouble me no more, O my soule. What is the Law? what is sinne?

what are all evils in comparison of these things? Trust in God who hath not spared his own deare sonne, but hath given him to the death of the crosse for thy finnes, &c. Therefore when thou art beaten down, tormented, and afflicted by the Law, then say: Lady Law, thou art not alone, neither art thou all things: But besides thee there are yet other things much greater and better then thou art, namely, grace, Faith, and blessing, these do not accuse me, terrifie me, and condemne me, but they comfort me, they bid me trust in the Lord, and promise unto me victory and salvation in Christ. There is no cause therefore why I should dispaire. What therefore must I doe? The Law assailing and urging my conscience, especially when I perceive my self not to doe that which it requireth? I answer, That which Christ doth here, who admitteth or acknowledgeth no Law, although brought out of the Law of God, so learne thou also to doe, that thou mayest boldly say to the Law, leave off Law to dispute with me, I have nothing to doe with thee, and for that very same cause for which thou comest to dispute with me, and to inquire of me, how good and righteous I am, I will not heare thee: For it here maketh no matter what I am, or what I ought to doe, and what not to doe; but what Christ himself is, ought to doe, and doth. For now we are in the Bride Chamber, where only the Bridegroom and the Bride must have to doe, and it becometh not thee to come thither, nor to intermeddle any thing there. When he speaketh of Satan, death and sinne troubling the conscience, how triumphingly is it? saith he, Sir Devil, I feare not thy threatenings and terrors, for there is one whose name is Iesus Christ, in whom I beleve: he hath abolished the Law, condemned sinne, vanquished death, and destroyed hell; and he is thy tormentor, O Satan, for hee hath bound thee, and holdeth thee Captive, to the end that thou shouldest no more hurt me, or any that beleve in him. Therefore Satan, thou shalt not prevaile against me, in that thou goest about to terrifie me, in setting forth the greatnesse of my finnes, and so to bring me into heaviness, distrust, dispaire, hatred, contempt, and blaspheming of God. Yea rather, in that thou sayest I am a sinner, thou givest me Armour and Weapon against thy self, that with thine own sword, I may cut thy throat, and tread thee under my feet: For Christ dyed for sinners, if I were righteous, and had no sinne, I should have need of Christ to be my Reconciler. Why then, O thou peevish holy Satan, wilt thou make me to be holy and to seek righteousness in my self, when indeed I have nothing in me but finnes, and most grievous finnes, &c. This I know and more then thou canst accuse me of. Therefore whither thou lay my sins before me, or my good workes I passe not, but removing both far out of my sight, I only rest on Christ, I know him to be profitable unto me, therefore I will not make him unprofitable: which I should doe, if either I should presume to purchase to my self favour and everlasting

everlasting life by my good deeds, or should dispaire of my salvation  
 because of my finnes. Also as often as thou objectest that I am a sinner,  
 thou callest to my remembrance the benefits of Christ my Redeemer,  
 upon whose shoulders, and not upon mine own lie all my finnes. For  
 the Lord hath laid all our iniquities upon him. *Isay* 53. 6. Wherefore,  
 when thou sayest I am a sinner, thou doest not terrifie me, but comfort  
 me above measure. And the more vehement thou O Satan fightest a-  
 gainst my conscience, so much the stronger is my righteousness made.  
 I doe the more ardently pray, and my faith is increased. *Ser. 8. pag.*  
*61.*) Here I will abide in the Arms of Christ, cleaving unsepara-  
 bly about his neck, and creeping into his bosome, whatsoever the  
 Law shal say, and my heart shal feele. When I feele the terrors of  
 death, I say thou hast nothing to doe with me O death: for I have a-  
 nother death which killeth thee my death, and that death which  
 killeth, is stronger then that which is killed, namely Christ, that hath  
 slain both death and the Devil. *Heb. 2. 14.* (*Ser. 22. pag. 304.* If death  
 creep upon thee & attempt to devour thee, say unto it. Good Mistresse  
 death, doest thou know this man Christ? come & bite out his tooth, hast  
 thou forgotten how little thy biting prevailed with him once? Go to, if  
 it be a pleasure unto thee, incounter with him again. Thou hadst per-  
 swaded thy self that thou should'st have prevailed somewhat against him, &c.  
 thou didst bite indeed, but it turned worse to thy self, &c. Although I am  
 a sinner by the Law, yet I dye nor because Christ lieth, who is both my  
 righteousness and everlasting life, in that righteousness and life I  
 have no sinne, &c. When he read *John* 16. 33. But be of good cheer.  
 I have overcome the world. He brake out into these words. A man  
 could find in his heart to fetch such a sentence upon his knees from  
 Rome or Hierusalem, how was he taken up into admiration with it.  
 Oh! saith he (*on Mar. 3. 17.*) Nothing else was heard and seen but  
 love, good wil, and the infinite and incredible favour of God towards  
 us; nothing but unmeasurable, and bottomlesse goodnesse, and placabi-  
 lity; Al the whole vast heaven seemed not to distill drops, but  
 to poure and rain down whole showers and floods of most sweet hony  
 and sugar, &c. for this would God sound these words from heaven  
 with his own voice, that he might perswade us certainly, and that wee  
 might fix it deeply in our minds, that in Christ, and for Christ his be-  
 loved sonne, tis his will to lade us with his benefits, &c. and imbrace  
 us as a Father most lovingly. Truly with no praises could Christ  
 be more glorified, nor extolled more magnificently; for by this  
 voice he is set in a most illustrious dignity, & high glory, he's proclaimed  
 and declared the true King of peace, a true Priest, working perfect  
 atonement, and the heire and Lord of all things, who alone pacified  
 his Father, and brings to passe, that he is well pleased with us. More-  
 over in these words, God the Father testifieth that he is of a right fa-  
 therly

therly, and well pleased mind to them that beleeve in Christ; to these he declares and opens himself wholly, and leaves it witnessed to our consciences that he is at perfect peace with us, &c. And on Mar. 11. 28. Come unto me, &c. As though he said, run and seek in what placei ever ye will; heare and learne whatsoever can be preached unto you, yet shall ye find no quietnesse of heart, ye shall find no peace but in me alone. Sermon the 8. page 87. Here he looketh for us, here he will receive us, here is the throne of grace and the true mercy seat, from which none is driven away, which with true faith resort unto it, (but) here they that seek shall find, here they that aske shall be heard, here they that knock, the endlessse treasures of heaven shall be opened. Beware thou presume not to deal with God without me. Oh creep into me, put on me, and so come and have whatsoever thou desirest, being wrapt, throwed, and clothed in the humanity of Christ, and so in Christ only thou hast access to the Father. When he deborts from curious speculations of God, how sweet and safe is his aduertisement: on Psalme 130 and in many other places. For this cause I doe so often admonish you, that without Christ you should shut your eyes, and stop your eares, and say you know no God besides him which was in the lap of the Virgin Mary, and suck't her breasts. Where this God Christ Iesus is, there is God wholly, there is the whole divinity, there is the Father and the Holy Ghost. Without this Christ there is no God. I have known many in the Kingdom of Antichrist, which seeking to comprehend God by mans speculations, have horribly perished. And if God through his inestimable mercy had not delivered me from this teneation, I had also fallen headlong into destruction. The nature of God is higher then that we are able to attaine unto it. Wherefore he hath humbled himself to us, and taken upon him that nature which is best known and most familiar unto us, (to wit) even our own, here he will receive us, &c. Iohn 6. No man cometh to the Father but by me, &c. Here is the mercy seat & throne of grace that we may safely and comfortably conceive of God, and come to him, in, and by. For the nature of man is more fraile, then that it should once conceive of God out of a Mediator. Wherefore he hath given us, this new and living way, that through the vaile of Christs flesh we may behold him, and in whom, and by whom, we must have to doe with him. Hence it is, that Turks, Iewes, and others so grossly erre, &c. And therefore they also that strive to come directly to God, doe profit themselves nothing at all thereby, whilst thus they come to God in prayer without the sonne, they which doe here neglect him, as though he were made man for nought, and in the meane season do without a Mediator pray unto God, who hath created Heaven and Earth, they pray indeed, but none shall help them, they shall cry and none shall heare them. Therefore beware that thou presume not to deal with God, nor once to conceive  
(of him

of him out of Christ, who is God, man, and blessed for ever. Rom. 9. 5.  
When he speaks of the great Article of Iustification, on Psa. 130. and in  
many other places he saith: This is the chiefest point of our salvation and  
righteousnesse before God. The true and sincere knowledge whereof  
is it which mainrained and preserveth the Church: for it is the know-  
ledge of verity and life, Contrariwise, where the knowledge of our Ius-  
tification is lost, there is no life, no Church, no Christ, neither is there  
any judgment left, either of doctrine or of spirit, but all is full of horri-  
ble darknesse and blindness. And on Gal. 3. 1. for he hath here no tri-  
fling matter in hand, but the chiefest Article of all Christian doctrine.  
The utilitie and maiestie whereof, who so rightly esteemeth to him all  
other things, shall seem but vile and nothing worth. For what is Peter?  
what is Paul? what is an Angel from heaven? what are all other creatures  
to the Article of Iustification? Which if we know, then are we in the  
cleare light: but if we be ignorant thereof, then are we in most mis-  
erable darknesse. Wherefore if ye see this Article impugned or defaced,  
feare not to resist Peter, or an Angell from Heaven, &c. This doctrine  
it bringeth with it all good things, as well ghostly as bodily, namely  
forgiveness of sinnes, true righteousness, peace of conscience, and  
everlasting life. It approveth and establisheth civill Government, hous-  
hold government, and all kinds of life that are ordained and appointed  
of God. It rooteth up all doctrines of error, sedition, confusion and  
such like: and putteth away the feare of sin and death, and to be short,  
it discovereth all the subtilt slyghts and works of the Devill, and open-  
eth the benefits and love of God towards us in Christ. What means the  
world to hate this doctrine, and gladly to give of everlasting comfort,  
grace, salvation and eternall life, so bitterly, and to persecute it with  
such divillish outrage? accounting it the greatest plague that can befall  
them, I know that the Devill goeth about nothing more, then that he  
may take away this knowledge from the sight & minds of men, by busying  
them with disputations, that this Article may be forgotten, or not so  
effectually be made use of, for he knowes the force of it, and it is no won-  
der that Satan doth so beset him. By it he is overthrowne, his kingdom  
is destroyed, the Law, sin, and death (wherewith as most mighty and  
invincible tyrants, he hath brought all mankind in subiection under his  
dominion) are wrested out of his hands, and his prisoners are trans-  
lated out of the kingdom of darknes into the kingdom of light and liberty.  
Should the Devill suffer all this? Should not the Father of all lyes employ  
all his force and subtill pollicies, to darken, to corrupt, and utterly to  
root out this doctrine of our salvation and eternall life? indeed S. Paul  
complained, that in his time the Devill shewed himself a cunning  
workman in this busines. This passive righteousness, or Christian  
righteousnes, the righteousness of faith is hidden in a mystery, which  
the world doth not know, yea Christians themselves doe not thoroughly  
understand



understand it, and can hardly take hold of it in the time of temptation; therefore good Pastors will be daily and continually handling this point &c for who so doth not understand and apprehend this righteousness, must needs in afflictions and errors of conscience be overthrown; for there is no comfort of conscience so firme and so sure as this passive righteousness, that's apprehended by faith. And Mr. Fox saith of it. That unless the speciall grace of Christ doe help, hard it is to flesh and blood to comprehend this mystical and joyfull doctrine of Iustification; so strange it is to carnal reason, so darke to the world, so many enemies it hath, that except the spirit of God from above doe reveale it, Learning cannot reach it, wisdom is offended, nature is astonished, Devils doe not know it, men doe persecute it, briefly, as there is no way to life, so easie, to whom it is given from above, so there is none so hard, easie to whom its given from above, hard to the carnall sense not inspired, the ignorance whereof is the root of all the errors, sects, and divisions in the world. When he speaks of the perverse nature of man, he saith; there is nothing else in man but wickedness, delusion, guile, deceit, lying, fraud, and all kind of evil, ye by nature man is but lyes and vanity. We must not trust any man, in any thing, doe not perswade thy self, that any man speaketh the truth unto thee, for whatsoever man speaketh is a lye. Why so? The fountain or spring head, the heart is not sincere, wherefore neither can the rivers be pure, &c. As soon as thou thinkest in thy mind: Hee is a good man, and one that will keep his promise, I am sure that he will not deceive me, but wilt deale faithfully, even then hast thou fallen from God and worshipped an Idol, putting thy trust in a Lye. Wherefore when thou hast any dealing with man, thinke boldly: If he doth faithfully it is well, if he do otherwise, in the name of God let him goe (and say) I will commit all things to the will of God, he shal prosperously bring them to passe. O how often have we committed Idolatry in this kind? When he speaks of faith, and its three Arms, how excellent is he in's Christian liberty and elsewhere. He saith through faith every Christian is advanced above all things, and in spiritual power he is even Lord over all, yet faith frees us not from good works, but from the wicked opinion of works, and that by faith we dwell in Christ, and in our neighbour by love, faith killeth reason, that Beast and Monster in Religion, that al the world cannot kill, &c. Faith even laugheth at al the iniquity, rage and fury of the world, and maketh that unto it self matter of spirituall ioy, wherewith others are even killed, Ser. 20. pag. 246 faith overcomes sin, death and the flesh, the world and the Devil. Faith is that noble Champion which overcommeth and extinguisheth every sin, & if al the sins which the whole world hath committed from the beginning, were laid upon an heap, it would extinguish and abolish them altogether: Faith hath to do in great matters, it giveth glory to God, it beleeveth in him, it counteth him

him true, wise, righteous, mercifull and Almighty, &c. On psal. p. 131  
Faith and the life of a Christian is not hypocrisis, &c. as their  
life is, which seek to come to perfection by certain speculations of spi-  
rituall union (as they call it) but altogether in vaine, as I have proved by  
mine own experience, &c. But every Christian through his faith filleth  
heaven and earth, heaven with his faith, and earth with his works. Faith  
doth couple Christ and the Christian more neerer together, then the hus-  
band and his wife are united together. Faith makes us divine people (and  
as a man would say) it is the Creator of a certain divinity, not in the sub-  
stance of God, but in us, for without faith, God loseth in us his glory,  
wisdom, righteousness, and mercy, &c. Faith in Christ is a treasure inesti-  
mable containing in it self al salvation, and preserving from al evil, &c.  
Believe in Christ in whom are premised unto thee grace, righte-  
ousnes, peace, freedom, and in whom thou shalt have all things if thou be-  
leeve, and without whom, thou shalt lack al things if thou dost not beleve,  
for that which is impossible to thee in all the works of the Law, thou shalt  
very easily and briefly atchieve, and bring to passe through faith, because  
God hath so established al things in faith, that whosoever hath faith may  
possesse all things, and whoso doth want faith may possesse nothing. For  
God hath shut up al things under unbelieve, that he might have mercy on  
al. Rom. 11. That so al things may belong unto God only, as well the  
Commandments as also the performance of the same, only God command-  
eth, only God performeth, therefore Gods promises have relation to the  
new Testament itself. The first arme of faith is this. Forasmuch therefore  
as the promises of God be holy words, true, iust, peaceable, and full of al  
goodnes, it commeth to passe, that the soule which doth cleave itself fastly to  
the same, with an unshaken faith, is become so united unto them, yea is al-  
so so swallowed up of them, that it doth not only partake thereof, but is  
thoroughly gorged and made drunken with al the power and force of the  
same: for if the touching of Christ did give health, how much more shal a  
very tender feeling of the word in the spirit: may rather a thorow swallow-  
ing down of the word, communicate to the soule all things that appertain  
to the word. By this meanes therefore the soule through faith only is iusti-  
fied, sanctified, pacified, delivered and replenished with al goodnesse, and  
is truly made the daughter of God, Iohn 1. 12 By this it may easily be per-  
ceived from whence faith hath received so great force, and why neither any  
one, nor all good works are comparable unto her, because no worke can  
cleave it unto Gods word, nor be within the soule, where in faith only and  
the word do reign and govern, for such as the word is, such becommeth the  
soule made by force of the word, even as a fiery plate, of iron doth glimmer  
like unto fire, by meanes of uniting the fire and the plate together, so that  
it is manifest, that to a Christian man faith only sufficeth to Iustification.  
Now if he need no works, then also he needs not the Law: if he have no  
need of the Law, surely he is then free from the Law. So this also is true, the  
Law

Law is not made for the righteous man,' and this is that same Christian li-  
 berry our faith which doth work in us not to be idlers, nor to give our selves  
 to lust and evill life, but that we be not tyed to a necessity of observing the  
 law, or doing works to the end to obtain righteousness or saluation thereby.  
 The second arme of faith, 'tis to reverence him in whom we doe beleeve,  
 with a most godly and earnest bent affection, to wit, that it accompt him  
 true, and worthy to be believed, for there is no honour like unto  
 the opinion conceived of truth and righteousness, wherewith we do most  
 highly esteeme of him we do beleeve, for what are we able to ascribe to any  
 person, more then truth, righteousness, and goodnes, of all parts perfect and  
 absolute? contrariwise it is a detestable reproach to conceive a secret o-  
 pinion of a man to be false, faithlesse and wicked. So the soule as long as it  
 stedfastly beleeveth in God that maketh the promise, doth accompt him true  
 & righteous, this is the highest honour to God, to ascrib unto him truth, ju-  
 stice, & whatsoever else ought to be yeilded to him in whom we do beleeve:  
 this man is ready to execute all his will: this man doth sanctifie his name:  
 this man suffereth himself to be exercised according to the will and plea-  
 sure of God, because cleaving firmly to his promises, he doubteth not but  
 that he is true, just, wise, & will doe, dispose & govern al things for the best:  
 but is not such a soule by the same (his faith) most humbly obedient to God  
 in all things? What commandment remaineth then, that this obedience  
 hath not sufficiently satisfied? What fulnesse can be more absolute? then  
 all manner of humble obedience? But this obedience commeth not by  
 works, but by faith only and beleiving the promises, on the other side, what  
 rebellion? what impiety? what greater reproach can there be unto God then  
 not to beleve him when he promisseth? For what is this else, then either  
 to make God a Liar, or be doubtfull of his truth? to ascribe truth to himself,  
 and condemne God of vanity and lying? wherein doth he not deny God  
 and make to himself an Image of himself in his own heart? What availe  
 deeds in this unbelieve, though they see me never so Angelicall and Apo-  
 stolicall? and therefore very well old God conclude all (not in wrath and  
 lust, but) in unbelieve, lest such as faine that they have fulfilled the law  
 through chaste and meek works of the law, should presume upon their sal-  
 vation, when as being shut up in the sin of unbelief, they must either seek for  
 mercy, or be damned through justice. &c. The third arme of Faith which is a  
 Jewell inestimable, is this, That it completh the soule with Christ, even as  
 the spouse with her husband. By which sacrament (as Paul teacheth)  
 Christ and the soule are made one flesh. If they be one flesh, then is there a  
 true marriage betwixt them, yea, rather a marriage of all the most perfect,  
 absolutely accomplished betwixt them, for marriages betwixt the man and  
 wife, be but slender figures of this union. Whereupon it followeth, that  
 all things are common betwixt them, as well good as bad, so that whatso-  
 ever Christ doth possesse, the faithful soule may boldly presume upon the  
 same, and triumph over them, as though they were his owne. Likewise, what-

whatsoever appertaineth to the soule, the same may Christ challenge unto himself as his own. Let us compare these two together, and we shall perceive inestimable treasure. Christ is full of all grace, life, and saving health; the soule is fraught full of all sin, death and damnation. Now let faith come between these two, and it shall come to passe that Christ shall be laden with sin, with death and with Hell, but unto the soule shall be imputed grace, life, and salvation, for it behoveth Christ to accept, and joyntly possesse the things appertaining to his spouse, and withal to communicate to his spouse the things that appertain to his possession, for he that giveth to her his body, and himself wholly, how can it be but that he must give her all things else withal; and he that is possessed of the spouse, how doth he not withal possesse also, the things pertaining to the spouse; here cometh low to the view, a most sweet spectacle, not only of communion, but of a comfortable battell, of victory, of salvation, and redemption. For, inasmuch as Christ is God and Man, and such a person as never yet sinned, never dyeth, nor is damned. Yea such a one as neither can sin, nor dye, nor be damned, and that his justice, his life, his saving health is unvanquishable, everlasting and omnipotent, when as such a person doth communicate to himself, yea rather doth wed the sin, death, and damnation of his spouse, through the union of faith. And that the case now standeth none otherwise, then as if they were his owne proper peculiar, even as if himselfe had sinned, were travelling, dying and descending into Hell, to bring all things into subjection, and that sinne, death, and hell, could not swallow him, being of all necessary, cleane swallowed up in him, by a miraculous conflict, for his righteousness is greater then the finnes of all men, his life surmounteth in power, all death, his saving health, is more victorious then all Hell. Even so, the faithful soule, through the assurednesse of her faith, in Christ her Husband, is delivered from all sins, made safe from death, guarded from hell, and indued with everlasting righteousness, life, and saving health, of her Husband Christ; on this wife Christ doth couple her to himselfe, a glorious spouse without spot or wrinkle, cleansing her with the fountain in the word of life, through faith in the word of life, of righteousness, and of salvation. Even so doth he marry her unto himselfe, in faith, in mercy and compassions, in justice and judgement, *Hos. 2. 19* When his Friends perswaded him from going to Wormes, lest they should burie him as they did *Iohn Hus*, how little did he feare the rage of man, so firme was his faith, that he said. That if I knew there were so many Devils in wormes as tiles on the Houses, (in the name of our Lord Iesus Christ) I will goe thither. Neither shall any kind of death or persecution shake my confidence. Oh! what faith and courage had he? when others were almost at their wits end for feare of the Pope and Emperors rage, and threatned wars, *Luther* was so far from being daunted, that he brake out to the admiration of them all, saying, come let's sing the *46. Psalm*. and then let all the Devils in hell doe their worst, so strong was his faith in Christ his refuge, rock, and strong tower, When he speaks of himselfe Oh! how disrespectively it is, a sack of wormes meate, O wretch that I am! A lump

lump of earth, a bundle of wickednesse, an unworthy Minister of the Gospel.  
 When of his marriage so cryed down by Papists, if my marriage be a worke  
 of God, what wonder is it, if the flesh be offended at it? it is offended  
 even at the flesh which God our Creator took, and gave to be a ransome &  
 food for the saluation of the world, if the world were not offended with me,  
 I should be offended with it, and should fear that it was not of God  
 which I have done. Now seeing the world is vexed and troubled at it, I am  
 confirmed in my course, and comforted in God. When a prodigious lye was  
 raised on him by a Lybell of his death, and how the Devils had carried  
 away his body, &c. with an hypocriticall admonition to take heed of his  
 doctrine, &c. and spread abroad two yeares before his death by the wicked  
 Papist: Luther read it, and thank't God that the Devill and his instrumen-  
 ts were such fooles that they could not stay until he were dead, and sub-  
 scrib'd. I Martin Luther do proteste and witnesse under mine own hand, that  
 I on the 21. of March 1544. received this figment (so little did he regard  
 this egregious lye) full of anger and fury, concerning my death, and that I  
 read it with a joyfull countenance: & that but I detest the blasphemy which  
 ascribeth an impudent lye to the Divine Majesty. For the other passages, I  
 cannot but with great joy of heart laugh at Satans, the Popes, & their com-  
 plices hatted against me, God turn their hearts from their diabolically mali-  
 ciousnesse. But if God have decreed not to heare my prayer for their sin un-  
 to death, then God grant that they may fill up the measure of their sins, &  
 tollace themselves to the full with their Libels full, fraught with such like  
 lyes. When he was kept in Coburg: Castle, that the Pope & Emperour might  
 not murder him, being banish'd, he wrote to Melancton and told him. That  
 if I perceive that the cause goeth not well with you, (as was at Aufburg As-  
 sembly) or be endangered. I shal not constrain my self, but shal come with speed  
 unto you, that I may see the gashly jawes of Satans teeth, if the cause be fault-  
 ry, let's revoke it, and fly back, if it be good, why doe we make God a liar?  
 &c. But I am resolute and secure for the publique cause. Because I am sure  
 that it is just and true, that it is Gods and Christs cause, &c. When he spak  
 to God, how confidently was it? I know thou art a father and our God, I  
 know therefore assuredly, that thou wilt destroy the Persecutors, &c. Lord  
 God maker of the whole world, I am certain that I am holy before thee, and  
 am thy servant, not for mine own sake, who doe as yet feele sin in my selfe,  
 but through Christ who hath taken away my sin, and made satisfaction for  
 me, &c. And at his death, what confidence had he in his prayer. O heavenly  
 Father, my gracious God / and Father of our Lord Iesus Christ, thou God  
 of all consolation, I give thee hearty thanks that thou hast revealed to me  
 thy Son Iesus Christ, whom I beleeeve, whom I possesse, whom I love, whom  
 I glorifie, I beseech thee, Lord Iesus Christ, to receive my soule. O my gra-  
 cious heavenly Father, though I be taken out of this life, though I must lay  
 down this fraile body, yet I certainly know that I shall live with thee eter-  
 nally, and that I cannot be taken out of thy hand. Lord I render up my  
 spirit into thy hand, and come to thee. Thou O God of truth hast redee-  
 med me,  
 Farewell.

**C**ourteous Reader, When I first heard of these 34. choyce Sermons of Luthers, how precious they were in divers parts of the Kingdom, & finding old, torne, and imperfect ones, were five, six, or seven shillings a peece, and finding the commendations of Christians like those of Salomons to the Queen of Sheba true, but not half to the worth of these Sermons, I resolved to reprint them, & for thy encouragement I'll boldly affirm, that never any laid down the ground of a Christians consolation more clearly then he hath here in these Sermons following. How is Gods goodnesse in's free, infinite, and everlasting love set forth to us, in providing, promising, giving and accepting Christ for us? And all that he did or suffered, and thus making us good trees, by putting us into the true vine Christ, and that maketh us Christians. Then he holds forth workes in their right place, but his transcendency in curing wounded Consciences, fallen, broken, and almost lost Christians, appears most perspicuously throughout the whole booke. Observe how he sets forth the Nativity, Birth, Life, Death and Conquest of Christ, &c. And all for thee, to discharge thee, beare up, help, succour, and revive thy drooping soule, trembling heart, and self guilty, fearefull conscience, and then thy heart will be cheered, mind satisfied, and conscience eternally quieted, upon the hearing, so fully and familiarly discovered the admirable glory of the Lord, and all the riches of his grace, thy salvation so freely, fully, and perfectly accomplished by Christ, and faith to apply him given of God, and his love so clearly opened to thee, thy conquest in him, and victory by him so fully proved, Gods wrath so appeased, his justice so fully satisfied, and his Law fulfilled, thy sins done away, death, hell, and the curse due to thee so far removed, as the East is from the West, the world, flesh, and the Devill, and all their works so destroyed and vanquished by thy Surety, King, and Saviour, that though they doe daily trouble thee, as they doe all good Christians, yet they shall never hurt thee, how will this worke upon thee to live well towards men, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance, yea melt thy heart, and change thy conversion from evill to good, more then the feare of hell, or hope of reward in heaven: Let experience in all the Saints iudge. But when thou shalt heare that Christ is the Governour of Heaven and Earth, and doth in love, both disposeth, orders, commands, rules, and doth all for thy good, &c. thy heart surely will leap for ioy, and then thou wilt be firme thee, wilt up and be active for the common good both of Church and State, though to the hazzard and losse of honours, state and life, and wilt for ever bid adew to all the vanities and fooleries of the world, the flesh and the Devil, having thine eyes opened, and beholding Christ adorned in's beauty, benefits and soule delighting glory, thou must of necessity break forth and say, I have enough, my Saviour Christ and Lord is alive. Then thy carnall affections will daily (though like Noahs flood) be abated, For doubtlesse the serious consideration

consideration of the free love, infinite wisdom, and rich grace of God the Father in providing his sonne, together with all the benefits of his death and passion, for such poor lost Creatures as we are in old Adam, and instead of turning us into hell, which we have most justly deserved; he should most frankly without a thought, word, or work of ours, receive us into favour; yea, and marrie us, poore wicked harlots to his beloved sonne. Oh! who is able to value or comprehend the greatnesse of this love, and the royalty of this marriage, the gloriousnesse of this rich grace, that God should not only redeem us from all evils, but also odorne us with all his own Jewels. And in this case, tis impossible now that our finnes can destroy us, since they are laid upon Christs shoulders, and swallowed up in him, and we now possesse the righteousness of our husband Christ, we may imbolden our selves, and rely upon that as in our own right, as if we had performed it our selves, and may oppose that against our own finnes with certain victory against death and hell, and say, though I have sinned, yet my sweet husband Christ, in whom I through faith freely given doe beleve, he hath not sinned, all his riches are mine, and he took all my sins on himself, and dyed for them, now shall I doe that willingly that crucified my Lord? God forbid. So that tis by serious consideration, holy exhortation, humble, and self denying resolution, that the spirit enables the Christian to dye daily unto sinne, and to live unto God his glory, and this power is fetch'd from the love of God, and the death of Christ; and this is the only way to kill sinne, to beleve that Christ hath killed it for us. And this is mortification of sin indeed. Then there will follow a daily dying to sin in us, and a certain crucifying of the body of sinne more and more to our own comfortable feeling, for how can it otherwise be, but that when the soule seeth sin through her crucified Lord, as it were the knife that killed the dearly beloved of her own soule, but that she loath sin, and hate it with a totall, eternall, and unsatisfiable hatred, as it is sin and contrary to God: and then the same spirit enableth that soule to mourne ingeniously, yea, and for ever to shun the occasions that may lead her unto sin, and to walk in the way of mortifying the flesh untill it be utterly destroy'd, for that's the spirits work, and the end of God in giving it. To strengthen the inward man Christ, and to weaken, yea and destroy to our sense and feeling Antichrist in us. Which is properly the work of the spirit of God, and the greatest happinesse that a Christian desires or can attain to in this life, and according to his light and present injoyment of Christ, he acts that which is good amongst men, and the ground of all uneven actings is from the want or weaknesse of Faith, and the spirit of Gods assistance: when that gales not, what tempests in the soule doth incredulity, unbeliefe, or that Antichrist of diffidence raise in our floating (seelike) spirits, that are restless in extravagant wandrings, when lost to her self, and is not centred on Christ, that only settles, and secures, satisfieth the soule.

Finis.



**A Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, of the Passibity of Christ,**

[ Luke 2: Verse 1. to the 14. &c. ]

[ *The summe of this Text* ]

1. **W**Hereas the Evangelist here describeth the time and place of the nativitie of Christ, first herein is required faith of us, to wit, that we beleewe this to be the same Christ, of whom these things be recorded. Moreover the house and stock of David is here notified and shewed forth, whereof our Messias should rise. 2. The Shepheards which are here mentioned, are the first frutes of those Jewes, which come unto Christ, as the wife men from the East are the first frutes of the Gentiles, and the innocent infants of all them, which must beare the crosse for Christs sake. 3. Whereas the Angells of the Lord appeareth to the Shepheards in great glory, it signifieth, that the Gospell commeth unto men with the glory of God. First indeed it maketh us afraid, for it condemneth our darkenesse and whatsoever is in us, untill we heate the comfort, which is here declared unto the shepheards in these comfortable words: *Be not afraid, behold, I bring you tydings of great joy, which shall be to all people, because unto you is borne this day a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*

4. Moreover, whereas one Angel first preacheth unto the shepheards, that noteth to us the Prince of all preachers Christ himselfe. Secondly, whereas many Angells are gathered together, it signifieth the multitude of preachers, who all say with one mouth: *Glory be to God, and peace unto men.* 5. The fruit and profit wherefore Christ tooke flesh upon him, is here expressed to be Evangelicall peace and good will to men, whereof the hymne of the Angells maketh mention: *Glory be to God on high, and in earth peace, good wil towards men.* [ *The Exposition of the Text.* ]

**Y**E have often times heard this history before, and must heare it still both this year, and every yeare, though to sluggish & drouse Christians, that are soone weary and cloyed with good things, the same peradventure may seeme tedious. But to them that are endued with true faith, it alwayes cometh again as new. For the holy Ghost can speake so diversly of one thing, that to them which be his, it alwayes seemeth new. Moreover we might speake at large of this history, for it is very full of matter, if we should not want time, and if it were not perillous lest we should some where stray from the purpose: Nevertheless we will entreat somewhat thereof, as God shall permit. Ye have already heard in the text, how the Angell himselfe expresseth all this history, giving us to understand, that the same is published for our cause: and that the fruis thereof doth redound and appertaine to us  
only



only, and is wrought to our salvation. And therefore the Angell speaking to the shepherds, saith in these words: *Be not afraid, behold, I bring you tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people, that is, that unto you is borne this day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.* Here is declared first, that his nativitie doth pertain unto us, when he saith: *unto you is borne a Saviour.* For the Lord Christ came not for his own cause only, but that he might helpe and succour us. Wherefore let us most diligently endeavour, that we believe the Angell, and we shall enjoy the whole benefit I have heretofore often times said, that the Gospell preacheth nothing else but faith, that the Angel also here doth, and this must all preachers doe, otherwise they be not true Ministers. For the Angell was here a beginning and example to all preachers. Now we must in this place speak of a double nativitie, namely of our own and of Christs. But before I begin to entreat hereof, I will handle the history briefly, that yee may lay it up in your heart, and may be partakers of the joy which the Angell here bringeth. First therefore the Evangelist saith: *And it came to passe in those dayes, that there came a decree from Augustus Caesar, that all the world should be taxed. This first taxing was made when Cyrenius was governour of Syria. Therefore went all to be taxed every man to his own City.* Ye know right well, that the Jewes had a promise made of the Patriarch Jacob, that a Prince, lawgiver or ruler, of the house of Iuda, should not be wanting in Iudea, untill the Messias which was promised them did come. For the words of Jacob to Iuda are plain after this sort: *The scepter shall not depart from Iuda, & a lawgiver from between his feet until Silo come.* Gen. 49.10. now at this time the case was so, that the Romans possessed Iudea, and had set a Lievtenant over it, whom the Evangelist here calleth *Cyrenius*. The Jewes before for a long time had used Priests for Kings, when as the Machabees had obtained the Kingdome, so that the dominion of the house of Iuda was already taken away and suppressed, neither was there any Prince or ruler, of the stock and blood of Iuda, governour over the people. But that Christ or the Messias should now come, that was a great signe, that the prophesie at that time especially might be fulfilled. Wherefore the Evangelist saith here, that at the time when Christ was borne, *Augustus Caesar* had set a Lievtenant over Iudea, under whom the Jewes should offer themselves to be taxed. As if he said: *Even at that time at which he should be borne, he is borne.* All that lived under the Roman Emperour were compelled to pay tax, for a testimony that they were subject unto him. This the Jewes knew, but they did not understand the Prophesie. Jacob had said thus: *The*  
*scepter*

## Nativitie of Christ.

3

scepter shall not depart from Iuda and a lawgiver from between his feet, untill Silo come: That is, a Prince and ruler of the stock of Iuda shall not be wanting in Iuda, untill Christ come. Iacob did sufficiently shew in these words, that he should be wanting at the comming of Christ. Moreover, whereas they understood it so, as though such a Silo should come, as should beare rule with the sword, it is a false understanding thereof, neither can it be gathered out of that text. For he saith thus, that at the comming of Christ the temporall Kingdome of the Jewes should end. So Luke also here sheweth that very time, when it behoved this to be done. It followeth moreover in the text: *And Ioseph also went up from Galilee out of a City called Nazareth, into Iuda, unto the Citie of David, which is called Bethlehem, (because he was of the house and linage of David) to be taxed with Mary that was given him to wife, which was with child.* Ioseph also and Mary obeyed this Commandement of Cesar, and submitted themselves as other honest and obedient men, and went to Bethlehem, which was the chiefe and head City of the house of Iuda, and suffered themselves to be taxed. Mary, in as much as shee was with child, and neer her deliverie, might have excused herselfe, that she should not take this journey upon her, but she doth not so, they will not be an offence to others. Moreover it ought thus to be that they should come to Bethlehem, because of the prophesie of the Prophet Micah, chap. 5 which foretold that Christ should be borne in Bethlehem of Iuda. Marke 2 pray you, how that taxe must serve hereunto, which neither Cesar nor his Lieutenant did know. Thus God dealeth in his workes, in which he useth the meanes of heathen and evill men, whereby he may make us, which are miserable and wretched men, and so deeply drowned in flesh and blood, certaine of our faith, which the Evangelist Luke here specially setteth forth, in as much as he eftsoones declareth in the history, the places and times, least that we should be deceived concerning this Christ. The manner of his birth the Evangelist sheweth moreover saying: *And so it was, that while they were there, the dayes were accomplished, that she should be delivered: and shee brought forth her first begotten son, & wrapped him in swaddling clothes, & laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the Inn.* Let it nothing move us, or be any offence unto us, that the Lord cometh into the world in so great poverty and misery. For it ought to be a great joy and comfort unto us, rather then in any wise to discomfort and discourage us. It may seeme a strange thing, and hard and strait dealing, that a Virgin which was new married, and that yeare joyned to her husband, might not be permitted to bring forth her child at

B 2

Nazareth

Nazareth in her owne house, but was enforced in poore estate to go almost three dayes journey being great with Childe? And when shee came at her journeyes end, she had not so much place in the Inne, as that she might be delivered in some parlour or chamber. The Inne being full, ther was none that would vouchsafe to give place to this woman being great with Child, that she might have the use of their chamber, but she was enforced to go into a stable, that there she might bring forth the Creator of all creatures Here may be plainly perceived what is the knowledge and wisdom of the world concerning divine matters, namely, that it is blind, and vaine in understanding, that it seeth not the workes of God, and if it be so that it seeth them, that it knoweth not what they meane. Hereof let us learne, not to be moved or discouraged, if we be poor and miserable, and forsaken of the world, for we have here great comfort. If Christ the maker of all things, with his beloved mother, was cast into so great miserie, and so contemned of the world, why may not the same also come unto us? or why should not we being in miserie, and compassed about with all calamities, beare them patiently, yea if God will at any time kill us with adversitie and distresse? But this thing is to be lamented, that we doe exclude such an example from our eyes, but much farther from our heart. We should easilie suffer adversitie and contempt, it so be that we beleved, and had a sure trust and confidence in God, when as we see that the Lord Christ suffered this miserie, povertie, and calamitie. Wherefore this is first throughly to be marked and considered of us, how Christ came into the world in so great povertie, and found not so much as one in so great a Citie, which was dutifull and beneficiall toward him. Thus this nativitie was received in the earth, over which notwithstanding all the heavenly soldiers did exceedingly rejoyce, as it followeth: *And there were in the same country shepheards, abiding in the field, and watching their flock by night. And loe, the Angell of the Lord came upon them and the Glory of the Lord shone about them, and they were sore afraid.* Here is declared, how God in Heaven setteth forth this nativitie, which the world contemneth, yea, knoweth not, neither seeth. This joy is so great in Heaven, that it cannot be contained therein, but bursteth forth, that it may be declared and communicated to the world. For the Angell here bringeth tydings of great joy to the shepheards, which to them is great comfort, which the world notwithstanding contemneth and rejecteth, but is of the Angells had in great admiration, yea and if they might, they would with greater praises, and more goodly pompe have set forth so wonderfull a thing. But it was not meet it should be so. For God would

would set forth an example in this his Sonne, that the ostentation and glorying of the world might at the last be neglected, and that it might be knowne what the world is. Mans reason seemeth alwayes very wise unto it selfe, it alwayes looketh unto things that are aloft, it considereth only high matters, it humbleth not it selfe to those things that are below. This now is an excellent comfort, that the Angels and all the heavenly soldiers doe esteeme him so much, whom the world contemneth, whereby we may learne that albeit we be outcasts in the world, there be notwithstanding that have regard and care of us. Howbeit we doe hardly beleevē this, we doe not fasten our eyes thereupon, but looke unto great, precious, and high things, according to the example of the world, and are dismayed, as soone as a little misfortune commeth, neither thinking nor knowing, if any adversitie assaileth us, that it is done by the will of God. Beleeve thou this undoubtedly, if it had not so pleased God, he would not have suffered this his beloved son to be laid in a manger, he would not have permitted him to be borne in so great povertie, miserie, and contempt. But the poorer and more despised that he is before the world, so much greater care & regard God & all the heavenly soldiers have of him, so that we may conceive comfort thereby, and beleevē assuredly, that the more we are rejected of the world, the more we are esteemed before God. Thou mayest find many which doe here thinke thus, and are touched with such devotion as this: O if I had been there then, with how great diligence would I have served this child and done for him: yea I would have washed even his swadling clothes. O if I had been so happie as the shepheards, that I also might have seene the Lord lying in a maunger. Now indeed thou wouldest be ready to do those duties, when thou knowest Christ to be so high and noble. Surely thou wouldest have been as slack in thy dutie at that time as the Citizens of Bethlehem were. Thou revolvst in thy mind childish and altogether foolish cogitations. Why dost thou not performe the like duties now? Behold Christ walking before thee in thy neighbour, doe for him, and bestow benefites upon him, whatsoever thou shalt bestow upon thy neighbour which is needy & destitute of help, that thou shalt bestow upon Christ himself, as he shal say in the last day to the Elect: *Mat. 25. 40* *Whatsoever ye have done to one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it to me.* Wherefore it is a vain & very foolish thing to admie such childish cogitations. Let us therefore at the last open our eyes, let us not here examples of so great importance in vaine, otherwise the time will come, when we shall be grievously punished. But with what words did the Angell speake unto the shep-

heards? the Evangelist saith after this sort. *Then the Angell said unto them, be not afraid: for behold, I bring you glad tydings of great joy, that shall be to all people, that is, that unto you is borne this day in the City of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a signe to you: Ye shall find the babe swaddled, and laid in a mannger.* Learn by these words of the Angell, how to use rightly the nativitie of the Lord Christ, neither let it suffice you to heare them only. A great treasure hidden in the earth or some other where, is to no use, but if it be openned, and occupied, then is it profitable and precious. Wherefore give heed hereunto, that thou mayest use this nativitie: otherwise it shal be no commodity and comfort unto thee. For whereas thou knowest the bare history only, to wit, what came to passe in his nativitie, and that he was borne needy and poore, thou shalt take no greater commodity hereby, then if thou heare a history written of the King of France, or of some other puissant Prince, whereby no commodity or comfort should come unto thee. But how must we use this nativitie rightly and with fruit? Even as I have said, if we be thus perswaded that he was borne for us, that his nativitie is ours. Our nativitie is such, that it altogether aboundeth with sinne, as David saith, *Psal. 51. Behold I was shapen in wickednesse, and in sinne hath my mother conceived me.* As if he would say: here is nothing but sin, as well in the conception as in the birth, whatsoever I bring with me from my mothers wombe, it is wholly damnable, it is due to death, Satan, and hell. For as much then as our nativitie, skinne and hair are defiled, what good can come thereof? This is our title which wee have received from Adam, in this one thing we may glory and in nothing else at all, namely, that every infant that is borne into this world, is wholly in the power of sinne, death, Satan, hell, and eternal damnation: our nativitie is altogether miserable, and on every side to be lamented. To deliver us from this nativitie. God sent another nativitie which it behoved to be pure and without all spot, that it might make this unclean and sinfull nativitie pure. This is that nativitie of the Lord Christ his only begotten sonne. Wherefore he would not have him borne of flesh and blood infected with sin, but it behoved that he should be borne of a pure Virgin. He suffered no spot at all of sinne in his flesh, but replenished it with the holy Ghost, and permitted nothing to stick therein, but those miseries which proceed of flesh and blood, as hunger, thirst, adversitie, and death, sinne excepted, as the Epistle to the Heb. chap 4 witnesseth, *that he was in all things tempted in like sort, yet without sinne.* This is that most excellent thing, which the Lord our God hath done for us, whereof  
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none taketh any fruit, but he that beleueeth. And none will easily beleeve this, but he that feeleth of what sort his owne nativitie is. He that hath no feeling of his own miserie, tasteth not of this nativitie of Christ. But if we feele our miserie, it followeth forthwith that we cry with the Prophet *David* and say: *Behold I was shapen in wickednesse, and in sinne hath my mother conceived me:* for we feele our sinne and our evill nativitie. When death shall come upon us, and our heart shall be rouch'd with anguish and griefe, then at the last it may be, that we would tast of this happie and pure nativitie, and will exceedingly thirst after it to injoy it. But now when as wee feele not our sins, neither doe as yet tast of the bitterness of sin, it slideth coldly to the heart, we heare it indeed, but truly it doth not thoroughly enter unto the heart. For if a man did beleeve, that this nativitie was for his commoditie, he would feare neither sinne nor death. Wherefore I have said that a Christian must beleeve, and doubt nothing, that the nativitie of Christ is as well his, as it is the Lord Christ. And as he hath of the Virgine pure blood and flesh, so that he himselfe also is pure, and that this Virgine his mother spiritually, as she was the mother of Christ carnally. Let the heart have sure confidence in this perswasion, otherwise it will be in an evill case. This the Angell signifieth in these words when he saith: Vnto you he is borne, as if he had said, whatsoever he is and hath, yee may challenge it to your selves. Also he is your Saviour, not that yee should only look upon him, but which is able to deliues you from the tyranny of sinne, death, Satan, and all evill: yea, and how great so ever he be, he is borne unto you, and is yours with all that he hath. Now forasmuch as he is mine, and hath changed his nativitie into mine, his flesh and blood also is mine, he himselfe is mine, with all wherewith he is indued, so that I dare say unto his mother: *Behold, that child which thou hast brought forth, is mine, his flesh and blood are my flesh and blood, yea and thou art my mother,* and I will be counted of thee for thy sonne, for whatsoever Christ bringeth with him, it must be mine, even as he himselfe is mine. If so be that his nativitie be mine, being of a Virgine, and without sinne, replenished with the Holy Ghost, my nativitie also must be of a virgine, and pure from sinne. Here now *Eve* the first mother is no more my mother, for it must needs be that that nativitie doe utterly dye and perish, that there may be no sinne remaining. Here this mother *Mary* is to be set against that mother, of whom I was borne in sinne. And thus the Angell bringeth with him great joy, for it cannot be, but that the heart should be made glad, when it injoyeth this Saviour as his own. When we come to hand strokes, that is, when we feele our miserie

and calamitie, there remaineth no comfort or helpe, then my heart cannot lift it selfe above the heaue burden, wherewith it is pressed down, but it must needs faint and be discouraged. But if I conceive a trust, and doubt nothing that Christs nativitie is mine, that my sins be taken away by him, I become exceeding joyfull, and am confirmed with comfort, whereby all heavinesse and sorrow is shaken of. This only is that comfort, and no other, which maketh a good conscience, which feareth neither death nor hell, for it alwayes resteth upon the word of God, which giveth Christ unto us. Wherefore it is a thing altogether miserable and lamentable, if such a good conscience be sought in any other things then here. Thou shalt find no joy, no peace of conscience, neither in Heaven, nor in earth, but in this Christ, be thou certaine and sure thereof. Wherefore let all other things passe, and cleave unto him only, if thou desire to be bold and couragious against sinne, death, the divell, hell, and all things that are against thee. He is the Lord and Saviour. Yee understand I trust, this right well, forasmuch as ye have now heard it so often. But I do with so great earnestnesse as it were beat it into your minds, that ye may see, that there is but one thing taught in the whole Scripture, which I would have to stick firmly and undoubtedly in you, this is that which I have said, that the use of this nativity be known. They which seeke any other thing, and use not this nativity, are in a desperate case, as ye have heard. Which yee have very well expressed in this song, the author wherof whosoever he was, did nothing erre from the purpose, to wit, that the only childe Christ is our comfort. Which words surely are of very great importance, and deserve most diligently to be weighed. For ye did sing after this sort: A child highly to be praised is borne unto us this day of a chaste Virgin, to the comfort of us wretches. If that child had not been born, we had perished all. Is it not said here, that there is no comfort beside only Christ? which indeed is most true. Without doubt the holy Ghost taught him that made this song, to sing after this sort. If the case stand thus, it followeth that Monkes, Nunnes, Sacrificing Priests, and all which leave this child, and seek to come to heaven by other wayes and workes, be condemned. For such say that they need not this child, otherwise they would confesse, that their own workes be nothing worth. These therefore doe nothing but deceive and seduce, of whom mens hearts are procured to depart from Christ, and are led away unto Satan. In the aforesaid song is contained moreover: Hee is the salvation of us all, oh sweet Iesu Christ, forasmuch as thou art borne man, defend us from hell. I greatly desire that yee did well understand

## *Nativity of Christ.*



Understand this. It is sung abroad every where but there is none that thoroughly beleeveth it. Whereupon it cometh that some doe oppugne these things, especially they, which know, sing and babble very much of them, that truly I feare, that Christ is never more blasphemed, then at this feast of his nativity, and at other great feasts, that it should be no marvell, if, when he is so blasphemed, he should suffer the whole world to be swallowed up: but the last day is at hand. Wherefore indeavour that yee may sound this excellent song in your heart, and as ye sing it in mouth, so yee may also beleeve it. If the case stand thus, that all things without this child are vaine, what neede is there then of much businesse? why dost thou run this way and that way, and indeavourest to doe workes, whereby thou mayst prepare thee a seat in heaven? which they especially doe, that murmure up many Rosaries, and doe continually extole the mother of God in mouth only, but in heart think more evill of her then of all others: and not only of her but of Christ himselfe also the Lord and Saviour. Wherefore commit this so to memory, that yee may be certainly perswaded, that whatsoever dependeth of any other then of that child, it is all damnable: otherwise the Angell had lyed. This must be compted for most certaine without any addition, neither are these trifles to be weighed, to wit, that this sufficeth not that thou dost beleeve, more things are to be added. For asmuch then as the Angell saith, that this child doth all, and that he is the saviour, and if he be not, that all labour is lost, tell me, how can it follow, that some thing is to be done of thee, when it is already done before? dost thou goe about to doe any thing that thou mayest obtain him? That child suffereth not himself to be apprehended and obtained by workes, for albeit thou heap together workes, notwithstanding thou dost not yet enjoy the child. Moreover thy workes be uncleane, by which such a great treasure cannot be gotten, no though they were even holy. But he is to be apprehended in heart, so that thou beleeve, and say to the Angel: I beleeve that it is true which thou sayest, and nothing at all doubting I count this child for a Saviour borne unto me. And this part whereof we have now spoken, pertaineth to faith. Now we have here also another part pertaining to Christian life namely charity, that workes may not be rejected. If thou wilt do workes, do them not in that respect, that thou perswade thy self that thou dost obtain any thing of God by them. But follow this example: such a one as Christ hath shewed himselfe to thee, be thou also toward thy neighbour. If thou doe more nearly consider the example of Christ, thou shalt finde nothing but mere love. Whereas he humbly



bleth himself and is born in so great poverty, that declareth nothing, but love toward thee, w<sup>ch</sup> moved him to become a servant for thy sake, as *Paul Philip* 3. saich, who knew that he might remain in divine glory. Now this he did for thy commodity, he bowed his eyes to thy misery and calamity, which art so miserable a man, wholly damnable and abounding with sinne, thy nativity is uncleane, thy misery is on every side most great, thou hatt deserved nothing but the wrath of God and eternall damnation. If thou hadst been a Carthusian Monke a thousand yeares, thou couldst not deliver thy self from this misery & damnation. But Christ is able to helpe thee, he is rich and hath strength sufficient: seeing therefore he can do such things, he doth them willingly and with pleasure. Love enforceth him so farre, that he employes all things for thy sake, & bestows whatsoever he hath for thee. Forasmuch then as Christ sheweth so great love toward thee, and giveth unto thee whatsoever he is able, do thou like wise to thy neighbour. Wilt thou worke workes: derive them to thy neighbour, who is compassed with troubles and miseryes. Thou must do nothing for this cause, that Christ hath neede thereof, whereby thou mayst enrich him, for nether was he bountifull to this end, that he might any thing profit his father thereby, or that he might receive any commodity of him, but he did it only for this cause, that therein the Father might be well pleased, inasmuch as he submitteth himselfe wholly to his Fathers wil, and loveth us with so great affection? After the same sort wee also must do in our workes towards our neighbour, which we ought therefore only to do, that we may give thanks to the father, that he sheweth his favour unto us, for that he hath given his beloved sonne unto me, to bestow upon me whatsoever he hath. When I believe this undoubtably, I burst out and say: If God sheweth unto me such benefits and favour in his beloved sonne, that he suffereth him to bestow all things upon me, I also will do the like againe, and bestow all things whereby I may do good to my neighbour and love him. And so I do not lift up mine eyes unto heaven, but I go thither, wher my neighbour is oppressed with adversity, poverty, sicknesse, sinne or errour, and I helpe him wherein soever I am able. Thus do thou whatsoever thou art, which mindest to do true good workes: as thou wouldest have done to thy self, if thou were troubled with poverty, so do thou to thy neighbour being poor. Again, if thy neighbour be a sinner, and thou seeest it, but thou thy selfe art without sinne, and hast a holy nativity, goe preach unto him, wherby he also may be delivered. But thou must do all these things freely in every respect, as Christ hath done for thee without all workes and merits of pure grace, love, and mercy. Such worke see thou doe  
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## Nativity of Christ.

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If thou wilt do good and Christian workes indeed. God hath no need of them, never the lesse thou must do them in respect of him, in as much as it so pleaseth him, and he will have it to be so. This only is rightly to do good workes, which those Hypocrites do not, which will merit heaven by their chastity, poverry, and obedience. Vnto whom I pray you are such workes of their good? I my selfe neede them not, neither doe they profit my neighbour, wherefore it is meere deceit, whereas a name is given to workes as though they did merit heaven, when as they are nothing worth, neither profitable to others. Lay up these things in your hearts, and do also according to them. In all this text being discussed from the beginning to the ending, yee have these two things, namely faith and love. If ye shall keepe these, then both the holy nativity of Christ shall be a helpe, commodity and comfort unto you, and also ye shall be spirituallly the children of his mother, as Christ Iesus is her childe carnally. [*An exposition of the song of the Angells, Glory be to God on high. &c.*] *Glory be to God on high, and in earth peace, good will towards men.* Forasmuch as this song is very common, and there be few that rightly understand it, when as notwithstanding it containeth many things in it, I think good to handle it somewhat at large. The Angels in this hymne apply three things to three: glory to God, peace to the earth, and good will unto men. The first is the honour or glory of God, with which we must begin, that in all things prayse and glory may be ascribed to God, as to him which doeth, giveth, and hath all things, so that none may challenge any good thing at all unto himselfe, neither ought to count it his owne. Glory is so due to God only, that no part thereof may be derived to any other. Adam being perswaded of Satan, went about to take this glory to himselfe, whereby all men fell into the displeasure of God, and have that vice so thoroughly fixed in their minde, that no other thing can be so hardly pluckt away from them. Every man pleaseth himselfe, no man can abide to seeme that he is nothing, or is able to doe nothing, whereof come almost all evils, so many contentions, warres, and innumerable other discomodities. This glory Christ gave to God his Father, teaching that al our things are nothing before God but sinnes, which deserve his wrath and indignation, & nothing lesse then glory. Wherefore there is no cause, that we should even never so litle please our selves or glory in them, but rather that we should be ashamed and feare, being set in so great perill and confusion, that so al our glory and pleasing of our selves may passe away and come to nothing, and we may rejoyce being destitute of our own glory, that we may be found and saved in Christ alone. The second is peace in earth,

earth. For, as where the glory of God is not, and where every one seeketh his owne glory, there cannot be peace, according as Salomon sayth Proverb. 13. *Among the proud there is ever strife*: so contrariwise, where the glory of God is known, there true peace also must needs be. For why should they contend? why should they disagree, which do know every one of them, that they have no good thing of their owne, but that all things which are, which they have, and which they are able to doe, come from God, to whose power also they commit all things, they in the meane season being very well content, that they have God favourable unto them? How also can it be, that when one counteth nothing of himselfe and the things that bee his, he should be so carefull of himself and his things, that he should move contention with any because of them? Such believe that Christ only is made all things unto them, him they think on, and for him alone they contend. Hereupon it certainly followeth, that there can be no contention or discord at all among true Christians: which manner of peace of Christians Esay declareth, and saith: c. 11 v. 9. *No man shall do evill unto an other, no man shall destroy another in my holy hill*, that is, in the Church of Christ. The cause hereof he addeth next after: *The earth is full of the knowledge of God*, that is, for al know God as to whom all good things do belong, & al there own things they confesse to be nothing but sinnes, they may easily therefore have peace among themselves. Wherefore the same Esay saith in an other place: c. 2 v. 4. *They shall break their swards into mattocks, and their speares to make sythes, & one shall not lift up a weapon against another, neither shall they learne to fight from thence forth*. Hereupon Christ is called the King of peace, or the Prince of Peace, of whom Salomon was a figure, who is called peaceable. For Christ is truly called our king Salomon, that is, peaceable, which hath restored peace unto us inwardly with God through faith in him, and outwardly with our neighbours through love, whereby we live friendly with all men: and so by him we have peace every where both inwardly, and outwardly in the earth.

The third is good will of men. Not that good will, whereby wee worke good workes, but whereby we take in good part all things that happen, whether they be good or evill, sweete or sower, and do receive them with a quiet heart. The Angells knew that the peace which they did sing of, should be only among Christians, which in all things do depend upon Christ, and usurpe nothing themselves as their owne. But in the meane season the world and Sathan, which doe exceedingly envy them, doe on every side procure trouble unto them, & persecute them even unto death, so that they may look for no  
peace

peace or quiernesse at al of these, for Christ saith, *Ioh. 16. In me ye shall have peace, but in the world ye shall have affliction.* Therefore it was not enough for the Angels to have sung, *peace in earth*, but it was to be added: *and good will towards men*, that when they, as much as they are able, have peace with all men, and neverthelesse are continually hated of all men, and doe suffer persecution, they may alwayes keepe a good will, whereby they may take all things in good part, and give thanks to God, howsoever he dealeth with them, or suffereth them to be dealt with, they may not murmur, but resign and commit themselves wholly to the will of God, yea (forasmuch as they know that God doth dispose and Govern all things, whom they are sure, that they have a mercifull and most favourable father unto them through Christ) they may even rejoyce and be glad in persecutions, according to that saying of Paul in the Epistle to the Romanes: *we rejoyce in afflictions and persecutions.* For inasmuch as they have a joyfull conscience & a sure trust of the favour of God, they cannot but count all things for the best, whatsoever happen. Behold what kinde of good will it is in all things, whether they be prosperous or unprosperous, which the Angels doe here wish unto men, and sing to be proper to the believers. Where such good will is wanting, there peace cannot belong. Men take all things in the worse part, they take nothing in good part, but doe always encrease and double the evill. Hereupon howsoever God dealeth with them, they like it not, but require that they may be dealt otherewise with, and so it falleth out as it is in *Psal. 18. with the pure thou shalt be pure, and with the froward thou shalt be froward*, that is, with him that counteth all things pure to himselfe, and hath that good will in all things, whereof we have spoken, thou also doest well agree, in asmuch as he pleaseth thee and all good men. But he that is froward, so that neither thou, nor these things that are thine doe like him, cannot but displease both thee and all good men. Of this well pleasing one another Paul speaketh, *1 Cor. 10. Endeavour to please all men, even as I please all.* By what meanes shall this be done? If thou take all things in good part, and suffer others to please thee, thou also againe shalt please others. The matter may be comprehended in one word: If thou wilt be liked of none, nothing shall be liked of thee: If thou wilt be liked of all, suffer that all things may be also liked of thee, but so, that thou doe not neglect the word of the Lord. For that ought to be preferred before all, without any regard had of all men, what pleaseth them, or what displeaseth them. But whatsoever may be done without transgressing the word of God, give place to all, and submit thy judgement to the

the judgement of others, that thou mayest take every thing in good part, which shall chance unto thee, and so thou shalt have the good will, whereof the Angells did sing. By this song it may be understood, what nature the Angells have. I omit those things which the Philosophers have dreamed hereof: here is so described what the Angells are, that it cannot be more fully done, their heart and cogitations being declared. First with great joy they sing praises to God, acknowledging all things to be due unto him, and therefore doe with an ardent mind, and singing glorifie him. As therefore thou wouldest thinke of a right lowly, pure, and obedient heart, praising God, and alwayes enjoying perpetuall gladnesse in him, so thinke also of the Angells: and thou hast now the nature of Angells, as much as they have to doe with God. The second thing to be considered in them is their love towards us. Thinke that they are most loving toward us, which desire that it may goe as well with us as with themselves, they doe no lesse rejoyce for our safety then for their owne, and even in this hymne full of love to usward, they declare themselves so affected toward us, that surely, we may thinke and rejoyce of them, as of most loving friends. This is to know the Angells truly, not according to their essence, whereof the Philosophers doe foolishly and without fruit babble many things, but according to their heart and mind, so that albeit I know not, what their nature is in it selfe, yet I know what is their chiefe desire, and their continuall worke. Thus much shall suffice at this time concerning the song of the Angells, and the fruit of the nativitie of the child Iesus Christ. God grant us his grace, that we may print these things in our heart, and according unto them also amend our life Amen.

**Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, of the Epiphanie or appearing of Christ.** [Matth 2 Verse 1. to the 11.]

*When Iesus then was borne at Bethlechem, in Iudea, &c.*

**W**E celebrate this day a noble, and most comfortable feast, concerning the appearing of the Lord Iesus, who appeared a speciall comfort to all them which seeke him with a strong faith: First to the wisemen which came from the East: Secondly, to *Iohn* the Baptist, when being about thirty yeares of age he was baptized of him in *Jordan*, and the holy Ghost and voice of the father gave testimony of him, that he is the sonne of God: Thirdly, when he shewed his glory and power in a miracle, wherein he turned water into wine at a marriage, whereby he would procure reverence and estimation to matrimony, which now (Alas) is after a shamefull sort borne, contemned, and rejected of the Pope and his adherents as a certaine

certaine miserable and wretched state. For whatsoever God hath ordained, that of the world is contemned: whereof at convenient time we will speak more, and we have already as I thinke written sufficient thereof. Now we will speake in few words of the first appearance.

The wise men of *Arabin*, which were industrious men, and without all doubt governours of that country (as it was at that time the manner in those parts) when they had seene the starre in the East, breaking of all delay, made hast to *Ierusalem*, diligently seeking for the King of the *Iewes* being new borne. Where we ought to marke that they could neither seeke nor find out this king, the Lord Christ, but by the starre going before them, which at the last led them so far, that by the word of God they were certified, where this King was to be found. So also is it with us: we cannot find Christ without the Gospell, without the word of God. That must shew him unto us, and bring us thither where we may find him: which then only is done, when we receive the same Gospel by faith, otherwise, although we have it, heare it, and know it, it profiteth us nothing at all, we shall not therefore find him, no more surely when the Scribes found him, who notwithstanding had the Scriptures readily, and shewed the way to other, not comming into it themselves, for the thing did not touch their hearts. They did drowsily neglect that King, whom with great sighes they had looked for many ages. Wherefore it is not enough that we have the Gospel, or that we heare it, but wee must beleieve it, and lay it up in the secrets of our heart otherwise wee shall never find Christ. Here also you see, that it doth not skill, whether one be learned or unlearned, instructed in many places of Scripture, or in few, unto whom God giveth the grace, he enjoyeth Christ. He respecteth not the person, but whom he draweth he is drawne, although in the meane season he provideth that the Gospel be alwayes preached. After therefore that these wise men had found the child Christ, the King of the *Iewes* at *Betlehem*, together with *Ioseph* and *Mary*, by the shewing of the Scripture and guiding of the starre, they were nothing offended at the poore state of the Child, but being taught by the word, acknowledged that child for the *Messias* and King of the *Jewes*, whom the *Jewes* had looked for so many yeares, and opened their treasures before him, offering unto him gold, frankincense and myrrh. Wherein again we ought to marke the nature of faith, that is offended at nothing, but cleaveth to the word only, and nothing esteemeth those things that shine outwardly. These wise men doe not therefore disdain neither turn back, because the child together with his parents were without all pompe in  
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povertie and miserie, and nothing lesse then a Kingly child appeareth unto them, but they goe on, and undoubtedly acknowledge him for a king, as they had learned concerning him out of the Scriptures. Moreover they give unto him the honour meet for a King, they offer most precious gifts, which they had brought, being even of the best sort, out of their own countrie. Now the world would have done no such thing, but according to the manner thereof, would have looked for garments of purple, and resort of servants, and handmaidens. In such places it is wont to bestow his gifts, to wit, where there is great plentie and abundance of things before: yee it is of that quality, that it depriveth the poor and afflicted of those things that they have, it taketh bread out of the mouth of the hungry and needy, which have nothing, but as they get it hardly, by labouring fore all that they are able. Whereof wee have to learne, that if we will honour Christ with these wise men, we must shut our eyes, and turne them from all that which seemeth faire, goodly and noble before the world: Neither must thou be offended or abhor it, if anything seeme vile, contemptible and ridiculous unto the world: let this suffice thee that thou knowest that it pleaseth God, which is in heaven. Take heed unto thy selfe concerning these things, which shine before the world, exercise thy selfe in those workes, which seeme unto reason foolish and light, as are, to help the needy, to comfort the afflicted, and to count the calamity of thy neighbour thine owne. If thou shalt be dilligently exercised in these, and faith being thy guide, shalt endeavour rightly to apply thy selfe unto them, then other workes which have a faire shew, as to institute Masses, to be occupied in vigils and yeares mindes, to build temples, and such like follies, shall by themselves be pluckt out of thy heart and vanish away, unto which workes, surely now almost the whole world is addicted: they are indeed faire in the very outward shew; and seeme to be very precious, when as notwithstanding they are an abomination unto God. But whatsoever God hath commanded, as to doe good to our neighbour, and to be touched with his adversities no lesse then with our own, to beare a friendly and well willing mind toward him, these are neglected, and in the eyes of the world appeare trifling and foolish: whereupon we doe greatly abhorre them. How cometh this to passe? Even therefore, because they have no goodly shew outwardly. And the common people of *Germanie* are wont to say: That which shineth not, nor hath not a faire shew, is nothing set by. Moreover God doth sooner suffer himselfe to lack his own honour and due service, then that he would have us to leave of

of from doing our duty toward our neighbour, as Christ witnesseth, Mat. 5. *If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thine offering before the altar, and goe thy way: first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come, and offer thy gift.* Here ye doe most plainly both here and see, that God will not be served, unlesse we first goe to our neighbour, and be reconciled to him. For the same cause also God rejecteth the sacrifices of the Iewes, as it is in the prophetic of *Esay* chapter 1. for that they did neglect those things which were more necessarie, namely mercy and faith: for thus he saith: *Why offer ye so many sacrifices unto me? I am full of the burnt offerings of weathers, and of the fatte of fed beasts, I have no pleasure in the blood of bullocks, lambs, and goates. When ye come to appear before me treading in my Courts, who hath required this at your hands? Offer me no more oblations, for it is but lost labour: incense is an abominable thing unto me. I may not away with your new Moones, your Sabbaths, and solemne meetings, your solemne assemblies are wicked. I hate your new Moones, and appointed feasts even from my very heart, they make me wearie, I cannot abide them. When ye hold out your hands, I will turne mine eyes from you: and though ye make many prayers, yet I will heare nothing at all, seeing your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you cleane, put away your euill thoughts out of my sight, cease from doing euill. Learn to doe well, apply your selves to equitie, deliver the oppressed, help the fatherlesse to his right, defend the widow, and so forth as is there rehearsed of *Esay*. By these words of *Esay* ye see what God requireth, and what he alloweth. When we neglect those workes, by which our neighbour is served, he againe will neglect us. For whatsoever benefit we bestow upon our neighbour, that we bestow upon God and Christ himselfe, as he shall pronounce in the last iudgement; Mat. 25. 40. *Whatsoever ye haue done to one of the least of these my brethren, ye haue done it unto me.* When thou hearest this, thou wilt not glory much, of the temples which thou hast builded, or Masses which thou hast founded. For then he will say: what haue I to doe with thy temples and Masses? what with thine altar and bells: thinkest thou that I am delighted with stones and wood, with bells and banners? Are not all things mine first? Heauen is my seate, and the earth is my footstool. Who commanded thee to build temples? I haue set living temples before thee, these are to be edified, nourished, and relieved, but thou hast been occupied with other trifles, which I haue not commanded. I know thee not, away with thy Temples and Masses: yet ought to haue put  
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your trust in me only, but all your delight consisted in such works, though it had bin your purpose by so doing to wrest Heaven from me, & that I may comprehend al in a briete sum: whatsoever I have commanded, that hath been of you neglected: and whatsoever I have detested and abhorred, that ye have diligently done: this therefore I will requite you with againe. I know you not, ye may resort unto that God which hath commanded you to doe these things. Here therefore let us learne, how the wise men did nothing abhorre the poore and on every side miserable appearance of this infant and his parents, that we also may be so affected toward the miserable and pittifull estate of our neighbours, and may be perswaded that we doe find Christ in them, and that whatsoever is bestowed upon them, Christ doth acknowledge it as bestowed upon himselfe. His Kingdome consisteth in the poore, dispised and abjects, yea, in the holy crosse, in contempt, in persecution, in affliction and miserie, as *Paul* saith out of the *Psalme*: *Psal. 44. 20. For thy sake we are killed all the day long, and are counted as sheep appointed to be slaine.* In another place also he saith: *2 Cor. 4. 11. We are made as the filth of the world, the of-scouring of all things.* Wherefore Christ said to his Disciples, when he sent them forth to preach in *Iudea*: *Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of the Wolves. Mat. 10. 16.* They now that seek Christ any other where then in such a contemptible forme in the crosse, and in persecution, doe not find him. The wise men did find the king Christ being newly borne, not in *Herods* court, not among the Princes and Priests, not at *Hierusalem*, in so noble and famous a City, but at *Bethlehem* in a stable, with poore and dispised creatures, namely *Ioseph* and *Marie*. In a sum, Christ will there be found, where a man would least seek for him. But we must diligently consider also, what these wise men signified by their gifts. For assuredly they shewed by them, that this child is a King, and not a king only, but also God, and man. In offering gold they acknowledged him for a King, as if they would say: We bring unto thee gold, not that we would thereby enrich thee. For gold, silver, and whatsoever is made is thine before, but hereby we acknowledge thee to be a most mighty King over all things. So we also offer gold unto Christ, when we acknowledge him for our King and Lord: but unto this is required a very strong faith. For if I ought to acknowledge him for my king and Lord, all mine owne will must be extinguished, that it reigne nothing at all in me: for Christ only must reigne and rule in me, that he may doe whatsoever it pleaseth him in me, and concerning me, all things must be committed unto him. So the leaper

leaper in *Matthew* did, which said unto Christ: *Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me cleane.* Therefore my will must be utterly extinguished in me, if that I will have Christ to reigne in me. Christ also suffered not his own will to rule, but he alwayes submitted himselfe to the will of his father, which he testifieth in the sixt chapter of the Gospel by *St. Iohn*: *I came down from heauen, not to doe mine owne will, but his will which hath sent me.* Yea he obeyed his father even unto death, and submitted himselfe wholly to his will. We imitating this example, which is written for our singular consolation, ought to submit our will to God and his Christ, and to rest confidently upon him. He knoweth how to bring the matter notably well to passe, as it is said, *Psal. 37. Commit thy way unto God, and put thy trust in him, and he shall bring it to passe.* And a little after: *Hold thee still in God, and suffer him to worke with thee.* Such sentences ought to prouoke us, patiently to suffer the will of God in us, whether sweet things or sowre, commodities or discommodities come unto us: for he knoweth with what temperance to lay them upon us. Blessed is he that beleeveth these things from his heart. Who being such a one, can be troubled with sorrow? Such a man howsoever he be handled, whether he be burned or drowned, cast into prison, or otherwise grievously dealt with, he taketh all in good part. For he knoweth that these things shall turne to his comoditie. After this sort doe we also offer gold with the wise men, when we take away rule from our owne will, and doe suffer Christ to worke in us according to his will and pleasure. VVherefore they are hypocrites which know not to suffer the will of God, but howsoever he dealeth with them, have alwayes, whereof they doe complaine. They forsooth suppose, that whatsoever they thinke, it shall have successe according to their thinking. If it fall out otherwise, they are angry, they doe not patiently suffer persecution and contempt: they murmur, they find fault, and vex when those things happen, no otherwise then horses being stirred up with furie or rage. So therefore by resisting they stay the Kingdome of Christ from them, and deprive Christ of Gold, which notwithstanding they ought to offer and present unto him, that is, they themselves will beare rule, and doe not vouchsafe to acknowledge Christ for their King and Lord. By frankinsense they resembled divine honour, which we then offer unto him, when we confesse, that whatsoever we have, we must acknowledge it to have come from God, and that we have it freely, and without any merit of ours: VVherefore all these things are to be ascribed unto him, as to the true Lord, neither must we glory one whit in the good things received, but his glo-

ry is to be sought in them. And if he take them from us againe, we ought to suffer him with quiet minds, and to blesse him with the beloved *Iob* in these words : *Naked came I out of my mothers wombe, and naked shall I returne thither againe : the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away blessed be the name of the Lord. Iob. 1. 21.* And so we ought to suffer all misfortunes and adversities, as if God himselfe did cast them upon our neck, so that none shall be able to offend us, unlesse he take away Christ from us. Not so much as a haire of our heads shall perish, as Christ saith to his Disciples, *Luke 21.* Wherefore whatsoever shall molest us, what adversitie soever shall come unto us, we ought never to seeke any other God, we ought no where to seeke any other helpe and comfort, then of Christ alone. This is he which is made unto us of God the father, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Then only we offer unto Christ that right frankinsense of *Arabia*, when we flie unto him alone in our calamities, afflictions, and anguishes. But they that seek after strange helpes and comforts, as of Sorcerers, Witches, and such like, they doe not offer frankinsense unto Christ, but stinking brimstone, wherein they shall be burned for ever, for that they have not beleevd and trusted in Christ. By mirrh they signified a mortall man : for with mirrh dead bodies were anointed, that for certaine yeares they should not putrifie. Now mirrh is a strong and bitter juice, which distilleth from the trees of *Arabia*, like unto gumme, or as with us rosen issueth out of the pine tree, the firre tree, &c. But then we offer myrrh unto Christ, when we firmly beleve that he by his death hath overcome sinne, Satan, and hell. And this is a speciall faith. If we doe but a little doubt here, it is not well with us. But if I beleve from my heart, that death, sinne, the Devill, and hell are swallowed up in and by the death of Christ, I shall not be afraid of them all. I shall easilie be preserved from rottenesse which death bringeth, when I have myrrh, that is, the death of my Lord Christ in my body and soule, this will not suffer me to perish. So strong and valiant a thing is faith, unto which even all things are possible, as Christ saith, *Mark. 9.* Here must we learne daily with our Lord Christ to bring under our old *Adam*, and to mortifie his concupiscences, by the crosse and tentations, not that crosse which we doe choose, but which Christ layeth on us, let us beare it patiently and with a willing mind, that so our bodie may be subdued, and made subject to the spirit, that being so buried with Christ through baptisme, we may be raised up again with him, and he alone may reigne and live in us. Hereunto vehement sighing is required, which the holy Ghost doth make in us for our sake, as *Paul* saith,

saith, Rom. 8. that Christ will help us, to keep under this unruly and obstinate flesh, that it presume not too licentiouslly, and thrust the noble soule into the myre. This our baptisme doth signifie, to wit, no other thing then that that old & stinking *Adam* be mortified & buried, which we ought alwayes to revolve in our mind seeing that as long as we live here, sinnes doe remaine in us. Wherefore alwayes something must be repaired in us without all intermission, through the cogitation of baptisme, as it were in a house decayed through oldnesse even untill such time as we depart this life. Whereof St. Paul entreareth in very goodly words, Rom. 6. which are diligently to be marked of us, now he saith thus: *Know ye not that all we, which have been baptized into Iesus Christ, have been baptized into his death? We are buried then with him by baptisme, into his death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead to the glorie of the Father, so we also should walke in newnesse of life. For if we be planted with him, to the similitude of his death, even so shall we be to the similitude of his resurrection, knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the bodie of sinne might be destroyed that henceforth we should not serve sinne. For he that is dead, is freed from sinne. Wherefore if we be dead with Christ, we beleeve that we shall live also with him, knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dyeth no more: death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he dyed, he dyed once to sinne, but in that he liveth, he liveth to God. Likewise thinke ye also that ye are dead to sinne, but are alive to God in Iesus Christ our Lord.* Thus much concerning the first appearance. Now we will speake somewhat of the second, that is of the baptisme of Christ. In the baptisme of Christ three things are to be considered: The first, that the Heavens were opened, when he was baptized. The second, that the holy Ghost was scene in the likenesse of a Dove. The third, that the voice of the father was heard, which said: *This is my beloved sonne, in whom I am well pleased.* Whereas Christ vouchsafed to be baptized with water, he hath hallowed baptisme, and made the water thereof holy, that he which is baptized in his name, might become likewise holy and cleane from sinne, and might have the heavens open. Now Christ was not baptized for himselfe, for he was not infected with the spot of any sinne, as St. Peter saith, 1. Peter 2 He behaved himselfe like unto a good Physician, which before the sick doth first drinke some bitter potion, that the sick may more gladly and boldly doe the same afterward. For we in baptisme drinke a bitter potion, namely, the mortification of the old *Adam*, which with the bitternesse thereof doth greatly

trouble us. For that dipping into the water or sprinkling with it doth signifie nothing else, but that that old *Adam* should perish and die. This is greatly furthered by the Crosse, which God according to his diuine will layeth upon us, which we ought not to cast from us, but beare it willingly and with a patient mind. But that this might be easier for us to doe, even Christ hath taken it upon himselfe, he suffered himselfe to be baptized, and tooke his crosse and carried it nothing resisting or gaine saying, and so was obedient to his father unto the death, even the death of the crosse, as *Paul* saith, *Phil. 2* that he might deliver us from sinnes, and might againe appease his heavenly father, which surely he did of his meer grace without any desert of ours: whereof we have baptisme a signe and pledge, as *Paul* saith unto *Titus*: *But when that bountifullnesse and that love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by the workes of righteousness, which we had done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of the new birth, and the renewing of the holy Ghost, which bestowed on us abundantly, through Iesus Christ our Saviour, that we being justified by his grace, should be made heires according to the hope of eternall life.* Secondly, the holy Ghost appeared here in the likenesse of a Dove, when Christ is baptized, whereby is signified that we also doe receive the holy Ghost in our baptisme, which ruleth and guideth us according to the will of God, which is present with us, and helpeth us in bearing the burthen of the holy crosse, which exhorteth us, is instant npon us, enforceth us, and when wee yeeld to the burthen of the crosse, is present and helpeth us: if wee fall, raiseth us up againe, and is with us as a certaine faithfull companion in our journey. He also maketh the burthen of the crosse light, which we were very unable to beare; if he did not put to his help. If so be that thou fall into sin, remember to goe back unto thy baptisme, for this is the only ship, wherein we passe over. Wherefore take heed of them which make two tables, whereby we passe over the sea of sinnes, namely baptisme and repentance. Beleeve them not, whatsoever they handle, it is meere delusion: baptisme is the beginning of repentance. As often therefore as thou fallest into sinne, have recourse unto thy baptisme, there thou shalt againe obtaine the holy Ghost, who may be present with thee. For repentance is nothing else, but a displeasing of himselfe, a detesting of his wicked life, and a renewing of the man, which is represented in baptisme. After such a renewing of the life, followeth the praise of God, & thanksgiving unto him for the grace received, then such a man bursteth forth, and behaveth himselfe friendly toward his neighbour,

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and doth good to him in all things. This is signified by that, that the holy Ghost appeared upon Christ in the likeness of a Dove: for a Dove wanteth the gall. Such they also become, which receive the holy Ghost in baptism, to wit, they are gentle and without all bitterness toward all. Thirdly, the voice of the father is heard in the baptism of Christ, which saith: *This is my beloved sonne in whom I am well pleased*. This is that Saviour, which delivereth us from the tyrannie of sinne, death, Satan, and hell. And here we must learne, how we must come unto God. He that desireth to be the gracious and deare child of God the father, must attaine unto this through Christ, through him alone the beloved sonne, who sitteth in the bosom of his father: unto whom alone the father looketh, without whom he alloweth nothing, and whatsoever pleaseth the father, it pleaseth him in respect of this his sonne. Wherefore he that desireth to goe to the father, must cleave to this beloved sonne, must lay himselfe upon his back. For by this voice all titles albeit they seeme very goodly and holy, are taken away, nothing is of value or estimation with the father but only this his beloved sonne, he is in his especiall favour. Now he that desireth to be in favour with the father, and to be beloved of him, let him flye into the bosome of the sonne, by whom afterward he findeth access to the father, as *Paul* saith, *Eph. 2.* that through Christ we are adopted, without this Christ we are the enemies of God. Whosoever therefore cleaveth to Christ through faith, he abideth in the favour of God, he also shall be made beloved and acceptable, as Christ is, and shall have fellowship with the father and the sonne. But where this is not done, there is nothing but wrath, there no honestie, no vertue, no free will, neither prayer, nor fasting, nor other workes shall profit, thou shalt but trifle with all these. For this is a most mighty, and most excellent voice: *This is my beloved sonne*, in whom all things consist and are comprehended, which are extant in the whole Scripture. Even as all things are delivered into the hands of Christ, and gathered into one, that they may obey him, as *St. Paul* saith. For when God saith, *This is my beloved sonne*, by shewing Christ only, and shewing and naming no other, he maketh it plaine enough, that none is his beloved son beside him. If so be that other are not beloved sonnes, it is certaine that they are the children of wrath and indignation. For if there were more beloved sons, he would not so set forth and shew this son alone, saying: *This is my beloved sonne*, neither would turne his eyes unto him only, and glory of him alone, as though he knew no other. For the words seeme to shew, that he did diligently look about, and

yet found none, beside him, of whom he saith: this is he, as if he said: Here at the last I have found such a one as pleaseth me, and is my beloved sonne, all other generally are not such. Moreover, these words are not so only to be understood, that it is shewed by them that Christ is very God, as the Epistle to the Hebrewes saith: *Unto which of the Angelles said he at any time, thou art my Sonne, this day begat I thee?* and againe, *I will be his father, and he shall be my sonne &c.* For it is most certaine that Christ in these words is declared to be the true and naturall sonne of God, seeing that this word was never said to any creature. Howbeit he had been as well the sonne of God, and had so remained for ever, as he hath been from everlasting, although this had not been spoken unto us from heaven, neither is any thing added or taken away from him by this name, but we must thus thinke and perswade our selves, that so excellent a praise, and so noble honour of Christ was spoken for our cause. For he himselfe witnesseth in *Job 12. 30.* that this came not because of himself, but for our sakes. He hath no need that it should be said unto him, that he is the sonne of God. He knew this before, and hath from everlasting and by his nature, that which he heareth. Wherefore when that is conceived by voice and word, it pertaineth to us, and not unto Christ. Christ without the word, is such as he is said to be. We have the word without him, of whom it is spoken. Wherefore we must lay fast hold upon the word without the essence, even as he hath the essence without the word. But what doth this word? it teacheth us to know Christ, in which knowledge our salvation consisteth, as *Esay, Paul,* and *Peter* doe witness. But how doth it teach us to know him? so, that he is the sonne of God, and doth especially please God his father, by which words God cheereth the hearts of all the faithfull, and greatly delighteth them with meer comfort, and heavenly sweetnesse. How is this done? When I know, and am sure, that this man Christ is the sonne of God, and doth in all things please the father, whereof I must be most fully perswaded: forasmuch as the divine Majestie doth confirme this by his voice from heaven, which cannot lye, whereby I am certaine, that whatsoever that man doth speake and worke, they are the meer words and workes of the beloved sonne, which are above measure approved of God. This therefore I doe singularly well marke, and lay up in the bottome of my heart. When as therefore I doe hereafter heare Christ speake, or see him doe any thing, and that for my commoditie, which surely he every where doth, (for he saith, that he doth and suffereth all things for us, that he came to serve and not that he should

should be served,) then I remember these words of the father, that he is the beloved son, then I am inforced to thinke, that all that Christ speaketh, doth and suffereth, and that for my sake; doth singularly well please God. Now how can God poure out himselfe more liberally, or shew himselfe more lovingly and sweetly. then by saying, that it doth please him from the heart, that Christ his sonne doth speake so gently with me, doth with so great affection looke unto my commoditie, and with such unusuall love suffer, dye, and doe whatsoever for my sake. Dost thou doubt, that if mans heart did with due sense feele such favour of God in Christ, to wit, that he doth so much for our sakes, it would not for joy burst into most small peeces? for then it would looke into the depth of the divine breast, yea, and into the exceeding and eternall goodnesse and love of God, which he beareth toward us, and hath borne toward us from everlasting. But we are to hard hearted and cold, the flesh doth lye more heaue upon us, then that we are able to comprehend such words, we doe not well consider of them with our selves, neither doth our heart come neer to feele how marvelous and unspeakeable love and joy they containe in them, otherwise without doubt we should perceive, that heaven & earth are full of the fire of the divine love, of life & righteousness, full of honour & praise, wherunto the fire of hel, wherunto sin, & death being compared, are nothing but as it were a thing painted or pictured. But we are cold, sluggish, and unthankfull wretches, for we passe over such precious words, as things of no importance, and as uttered of man, as being contained in a book, or written in paper, as things utterly decayed, and now long since growne out of use by long custome, as though they pertaine only to Christ, and to us nothing at all: And being dull and senselesse, we doe not see that they belong nothing to Christ, but were committed to writing and are ex- rant only for our sake. Seeing therefore that Christ the beloved sonne, being in so great favour with God in all things that he doth, is thine, and doth in the same, serve thee, as he himselfe witnesseth, without doubt thou art in the same favour and love of God that Christ himselfe is in. And againe, the favour and love of God are insinuated to thee as deeply, as to Christ, that now God together with his beloved sonne, doth wholly possesse thee, and thou hast him againe wholly, that so God, Christ, and thou doe become as one certaine thing. Hereunto make many sentences of the Gospell, but especially in Iohn, as this: *If any man love me, my father will love him, and we will come unto him, and will dwell with him. Iohn 14. 23.* Also: *Where I am, there shall also my servant be. Iohn 12. 26.* Again e: I pray that they may be one in us as thou and I are one, I in



in thee, and thou in me, and they in me. *John 17.* But where is Christ? In the favour of God, in the depth of his heart, there also are we, if so be that we know and love Christ, there I thinke we are sure enough, there our refuge is placed high enough, whether no evil can come, as it is in the 91. Psalme. But thou seest that faith is required hereunto, and that unto these things no law, no worke, no merit doth prevaile. Hereupon it commeth to passe, that so precious words are so abstruse and unknowne unto reason. For it hath been governed of Satan from the creation of the world, when as in Paradise it would be as God, and presumed after honour, which God here attributeth to Christ alone, forasmuch as he is his sonne, whereunto it is yet also prone and inclined, and setteth it selfe against these words, and the words againe are against it. For because Christ is here declared the only sonne of God, it is mightily overthrowne, whatsoever maketh it selfe god. But who be they that make themselves god? surely Satan and man, which please themselves, and love themselves, they seeke not after God, but strive to attaine unto this, that they also may become gods. But what will God say unto these? Truly a certaine contrary thing, to that which he said unto Christ. Christ is my beloved sonne, in whom I am well pleased, seeing that he glorifieth not himselfe, and maketh not himselfe God, although he be God. But yee are wretches, in whom I allow nothing, seeing that ye glorifie your selves, and make your selves gods, albeit yee be creatures and men, and not God. So this sentence given of Christ doth humble the whole world, doth shew them to be all void of divinitie, and ascribeth it to Christ, and that all for our commoditie, if we will, and doe admit this sentence: or to our condemnation, if we will not, and doe contemne this sentence, so that I may say at once: without Christ there is no favour, nor any beloved sonne, but very wrath and sore displeasure of God.

Certain sentences out of the Scripture concerning Christ, whereby is declared, that through him we are loved of the father, and without him are refused. *John 1. 16. 17.*

*Of his fulnesse, (to wit Christs) have we all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. John 3. 13. No man ascendeth up to heaven, but he that hath descended from heaven, even the sonne of man which is in heaven. John 3. 16, 17, 18. God so loved the world, that he hath given his only begotten sonne, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his son into the world, that he should condemne the world, but that the world*

world through him might be saved. He that beleeueth in him, is not condemned, but he that beleeueth not, is condemned already, because he hath not beleeued in the name of that only begotten Sonne of God. Iohn 3. 35. 36. The father loveth the Sonne, and hath given all things into his hand. He that beleeueth in the Sonne, hath everlasting life, and he that obeyeth not the Sonne, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. Iohn 6. 40. This is the will of him that sent me, that every man which seeth the Sonne and beleeueth in him should have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day. Iohn 7. 37, 38. Now in the last great day of the feast, Iesus stood and cryed, saying: If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that beleeueth in me, as saith the Scripture, out of his belly shall flow rivers of water of life. Titus 3. 4, 5, 6, 7. But when that bountifullnesse and that love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by the workes of righteousness, which we had done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of the new birth, and the renewing of the holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Iesus Christ our Saviour, that we being iustified by his grace, should be made heries according to the hope of eternall life. Many other such sentences there be, especially out of the Epistles of Paul, which every one may gather by himself. **(A Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, of the Genealogie or pedigree of Christ.)** [Mat. 1. Verse 1, to the 16.] This is the booke of the generation of Iesus Christ, &c. [The summe of this text.] 1. Matthew beginneth his booke with a title or inscription, by which the beleeuer is provoked with greater pleasure to heare and read it. For he saith thus much in effect: Whom the law and Prophets have hitherto promised and preached, Iesus, that is, a Saviour: and Christ, that is an eternall king, that he according to the promise of God, should spring and come of the seed of Abraham and David, even him doe I describe in this booke, to wit, that he is now borne, and made man, and alreadie come into the world. This I handle through this whole booke. 2. Threelines or degrees are here rehearsed. In the first is contained the stock of the fathers, in the second of the kings, in the third is contained the decaying stock of David: after the decay whereof it behooved that Christ should come. For so the goodness of God is wont to doe, when all things seeme even past hope and recoverie, then at the last he commeth. 3. Matthew omitteth one in his rehearsall, but that maketh no matter, seeing that he observeth this one thing, that he counteth by the right line from David by Salomon to Ioseph the husband of Mary. Luke counteth otherwise, and setteth another order.

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(The exposition of the text.)

**V**Hen Adam our first father having (alne by a notable offence, was guilty of death with all his children, as well in body as in soule, it was notwithstanding promised unto him, although obscurely, that both he and his posteritie should be delivered, in those words which God spake to the Serpent: *Gen. 3. 15. I will put enmitie between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed, and it shall tread down thy head.* Of these words Adam tooke comfort that a woman should come, by whose fruit such guile and subtiltie of the Serpent should be againe amended, and Adam redeemed, This comfort did uphold Adam with his posteritie untill Noe. For then the promise was renewed, when God made a covenant with the sonnes of Noe, and set the rainebow for a signe of the covenant, whereby men might conceiue a trust and confidence, that God is yet favourable unto them, and doth not purpose their distruction: whereby man kind was againe upheld and comforted even untill Abraham.

In the time of Abraham God did somewhat shew forth his mercie, he declared that he would send a Saviour, who should deliver us againe from death both of body and soule: for albeit the body should dy, yet it should not alwaies remaine in death, but rise againe with the Lord Christ: the words which God spak to Abraham. *Gen. 22. are thus: In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.* Here miserable men had a cause to hope and look for a Saviour which should deliver them. From that time all the Prophets did diversly foretell of this above measure flowing fountaine of all mercy, that is, of this seed, of the Lord Christ, how that he at the last should come, that all which beleaved in him, might obtaine salvation by that promise which can not be revoked. If so be that men would now open their eyes, they must needes confesse and say, that a strange and incredible thing is done with us, that man being in the state of damnation, cursed, and desperate, should be restored by the nativity of one man. Hereupon the Prophets cried out with ardent prayers and unspeakable groaning, that God would vouchsafe to send the Saviour whom he had promised. By faith in this Saviour the Israelites afterward obtained the Law, and this honour before all people, that they were called the elect people of God. By which ordinances written of Moses the anointed was plainly figured and signified, whom this text which we have now in hand seetheth forth, what he is, from whence he is, and by the aforesaid faith all obtained salvation from Abraham unto David, even as many as were saved. In the time of David God made the coming of the Messias to be more manifestly

nifestly declared, that it might be certainly known of what stock he should come: namely, of the stock of David, as when God said unto David: 2. Sam. 7. 12. *When thy dayes be full filled, thou shalt sleepe with thy fathers, and I will set up thy seede after thee, which shall proceed out of thy body, and will stablish his Kingdome. He shall build a house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his Kingdome forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my sonne.* And yet more plainly in the Psalme: Psal. 132. 11. *The Lord hath made a faithfull oath unto David, and he shall not shrink from it: Of the fruite of thy body shall I set upon thy seat.* Here Christ is described, that he shall be a king, and an eternall King, as it is mentioned of him in another Psalme: Psal. 45. 6. *Thy throne, O Lord endureth forever, the scepter of righteounesse is the scepter of thy Kingdome.* Howbeit he is a spirituall King, which ruleth the world by his word: and whosoever receiveth his word, pertaineth to his kingdome. But he that is not under this scepter, neither heareth his word, is not of God, neither pertaineth to his kingdome, but is subject to the Kingdome of Satan, under whose tyranie we all are, untill the Lord doth deliver us from it, and defend us with his scepter, which is then done when we beleve in him. Forasmuch therefore as our salvation doth come merely by the promise of God, let every one assuredly perswade himselfe, that he shall never obtaine salvation without this promise: although he should doe the workes of all Saints, yet they should profit him nothing hereunto. Contrariwise, if we lay hold on the scepter of this king, that is, of the promise of God, we shall not perish, although the sins of the whole world should ly upon us, they shall be all swallowed up in him, albeit no good work be done of us. As we see in the thief which hung by the Lord on the crosse, who laid hold on the word of God, and beleved in Christ, and therefore he obtained the promised Paradise. Here is no doubt left, let us only beleve that it is so, and it is so indeed, all things which men teach, or which we have done or can doe, being set aside. Here all things must give place, at the coming of this new King, that he alone may rule and reigne in us. Let a man intermedle with those things that are written of this King, as being his own matters, and as pertaining all unto him. For whatsoever is written any where of Christ, it is written for our comfort, that we may thereby feed and cherish our faith. To the establishing such faith God hath mercifully left unto us his promise written, and hath suffered to be published, that he will perform that which he hath promised. Whosoever apprehendeth this in his heart, it must needs be that with sighing he thirst for such scripture

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ture and promise of God, who of his grace being not provoked of us, offereth unto us, and bestoweth upon us such goodnesse and mercy. But let us now come to our present text, which not with words only, but also with a certaine force peirfeth the heart, and poureth into it love, pleasure, joy, gladnesse, &c. As if an Angell should now come from heaven, and say unto us miserable and condemned wretches, after this sort: Behold O man, thou hast sinned, wherefore thou hast deserved to be condemned for ever. (This being heard the heart must needs tremble.) Now although all this be true, yet neverthelesse God of his grace hath mercy upon thee, and sendeth to thee a Saviour, as he promised to *Abraham* and his seed. Be of a good cheere, and give thanks to God. Loe, here is the book of the generation of Iesus Christ, who is the sonne of *David*, the sonne of *Abraham*, so that this is not only done, but also written, that thou mayest be certaine thereof: Neither will he, neither can he deceive, beleeve only, and thou shalt have all things. Now it is to be noted that *Mathew* seteth *David* before *Abraham*, although the promise was first made to *Abraham*, and came afterward to *David*, which promise made to *David*, the prophets did afterward publish more abroad, and did by it comfort the people. As in the 11. chapter of *Esaie*, where the prophet saith thus: *There shall come a rod forth of the stock of Iesse, and a grasse shall grow out of his roote. Ieremiah* likewise saith thus chap. 23 *Behold the time cometh, saith the Lord, that I will raise up the righteous branch of David, which King shall beare rule, and he shall prosper with wisdom, and shall set up equity and righteousness againe in the earth.* And many other such propheties ther are to be found in the writings of the Prophets, which they foretold of *David*, that his kingdome should be raised up, as the Angell also declared unto *Mary*, when he said: *Luke 1. 31. The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reigne over the house of Iacob for ever, and of his kingdome shall be no end.* Wherefore *Mathew* thought good here to set *David* first as the better knowne, and next unto him, *Abraham*, unto whom the promise was first made, as *Mary* in her song saith: *Luke. 1. 54. He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Irael, as he promised to our fathers, Abraham and his seede for ever.* And that promise is now performed, and in this our text described, as we shall see hereafter. *S. Mathew* maketh a triple difference of fathers, of whom Christ came, fourteene Patriarkes, fourteene Kings, and fourteene Princes. For it becometh that the scepter and kingdome should be taken from *Inda*, according to the prophesie of *Iacob*, which is thus: *Gen. 49.*

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10. *The scepter shall not depart from Iuda, and a lawgiuer from between his feet, untill Silo come : and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.* Here all things must be fulfilled : and there are thrice fourteene generacions, even as *Mathew* rehearsed them: from *Abraham* to *David* fourteen generacions, from *David* till they were caried away into *Babylon* likewise fourteene generacions. Howbeit, there is a person omitted in *Mathew*, that is *Iakim*, & it ought thus to be written : *Iofias begat Iakim, and Iakim begat Iechonias and his brethren*, this the *Chronicles* witness. And after they were caried away into *Babylon* untill *Christ*, fourteene generacions. Which triple destination hath a great mysterie as we shall see. The *Iewes* among other lawes were commanded to observe these three precepts, namely, to worship that God whom their fathers had worshiped. Secondly to chuse no Priest of any other stock then of their own, that is, of the tribe of *Leui*. Thirdly to chuse no King but of their own people. These three precepts did very well agree in our Lord *Christ*, to wit, that he is that one God, that he is an eternall Priest, of our flesh & blood, and a King, our brother, who hath taken our nature upon him : who by his divine power is able to help and save us, and being an eternall Priest, continually maketh intercession for us. He is a King also, that he may defend and preserve us, who is not to be feared of us, seeing that he is a man as we are, yea and was made a most contemptible man, that our heart might be wholly quieted and appeased in him our Saviour, who can never forsake us. Who were able to stand in the sight of God, and not be terrified, if that Priest did not stand before God? Who should defend us, if he were not a King? Who should save us, if he were not God? How should he have care of us, if he were not a man, and our brother? with whom we may speake as well as we may one with another among our selves. O most gracious Saviour, how wisely hast thou done all things? I know that thou art my brother, as it is in *Psal. 22, 21. I will declare thy name unto my brethren*, as it is alledged in the *Epistle to the Heb.* albeit thou art God, my Lord *Christ*, and king of Heaven and earth, yet I cannot be a fraid of thee: for thou art my friend and brother. This is no hindrance unto me, that I am a sinner, and thou holy. For if I had not been a sinner, there had beene no need that thou shouldest suffer punishment for me, I see also in thy genealogie that both good and evil are rehearsed, of whose posterity thou wouldest come, that thou mightest comfort timorous and weak consciences, that they should confidently and cheerefully put their trust in thee, which hast taken away our sinnes. And that we might be certaine hereof, thou hast left us thy word, which assuredly declareth it unto us. Among  
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the kings and princes which *Matthew* rehearseth, some were exceeding evill, as wee may read in the books of the Kings. Yet God suffereth them to be rehearsed in his genealogie, as if they were worthy, that he should come to them. But he suffered not so much as one honest woman to be rehearsed therein. Foure women are named, which all had an evill report, and were counted lewd. As *Tamar Gen. 38* of whom *Judas* the father of her husband, begat *Phares* and *Zara*, as in the first book of *Moses* it is mentioned. *Rahab* is called an harlot in the book of *Iosua*. *Ruth* was an heathen woman, of whom although we read no evil written *Ios. 2. 1*. yet forasmuch as she was a heathen, she was despised of the Jewes as a dogge, and was detested of them. *Beth-sabe* the wife of *Vrias* was an adulteresse before shee was married to *David*, and of her he begat *Salomon*. Which women are undoubtedly therefore rehearsed, that we may see how God hath set forth as it were a certaine glasse unto all sinners, wherein they may see that he would be borne of the posterity of sinners, that the greater sinners we be, so much more certaine and greater refuge wee might have to so gracious a God, Priest, and King, who is our brother, in whom only and in none other we are able to fulfill the law, and obtaine the grace of God: he came downe from heaven therefore, neither doth he require anything of us, but that we assuredly belevee that he is our God, Priest and King, and then all things shall be well with us. By him alone wee become the sonnes of God, and heires of the heavenly kingdome, as *S. Paul* saith to the *Galathians*: *Yee are all the sonnes of God by faith in Christ Iesus. Gal. 3. 26*. Here the hearts of all sinners may leap for joy, that they are counted worthy of such a Saviour. Must not he needes be regenerate, whose heart understandeth and feelerth this? yea he is caried with a most ardent love to lead a new life, for he is inspired with the grace of God, inasmuch as he layeth hold of the promise of remission of all his sinnes.

If we will count upon our fingers the persons rehearsed in this text, we shall finde them to be forty and two, which were in time past figured by the two and forty mansion places, which the children of *Israel* had, before they came into the promised Land, as it is written in the fourth book of *Moses*. If we also will come into the promised land, which our Lord *Iesus Christ* hath prepared for us by his Nativity, we must also occupie two and forty mansion places, that is, we must cease from our own purpose, and be regenerate man by man, until we come to *Mary & Iesus*, there at the last we shall find rest unto our soules. But this nativitie is hard: for our evill and corrupt nature is very loth to leave her own will and purpose. And againe the case of nature is such, that no nativity can be without griefe, yet one hateth  
more

more grieve, tentation and affliction then another. The theife on the crosse leapt at one leap two and fortie degrees, and came suddenly to Christ. So did many Martyrs also, and other holymen. Notwithstanding none can goe so great a journey with small grieve, unlesse he be carried with a great wind, that is by the holy Ghost. We must goe fair and softly from *Abraham* to *Isaac*, from *Isaac* to *Jacob*, and so forth. But we must begin at *Abraham*, that we may be found endued with like faith as he was, and obaine the blessing promised unto him, then we shall more easily and cheerfully goe from one Patriarch to another. That is, we shall passe over one affliction after another, until we be called out of this travell and journey unto our rest. For a man must be so long exercised with afflictions, & so oft renounce his own will, until at the last he be brought under, and his flesh by this meanes be subdued, that it may obey the spirit, and walke joyfully in the will and obedience of God. Wherefore let no man purpose with himselfe, to come unto heaven by leading a quiet life, and following pleasure, thus Christ saith in *Luke*: *It is easier for a Camell to goe through a needles eye, Luke 18. 25. then for a rich man to enter into the kingdome of God.* And in the *Acts* of the Apostles *Paul* teacheth that we must through many tribulations enter into the Kingdome of God. *Acts 14. 22.* Again, in *Luke* *Abraham* said to the rich glutton: *Sonne, remember that thou in thy life time receivest thy pleasures, and likewise Lazarus pained: now therefore he is comforted, and thou art tormented. Luke 16. 25.* So it behoved Christ also to suffer and by the crosse to enter into his glorie. And *St. Paul* saith: *All that will live godly in Christ Iesus, shall suffer persecution. 2 Tim. 3. 12.* Hereupon we may learne, that all is poyson which is according to the lust of the flesh. Wherefore *Paul* saith to the Romans. *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die, but if ye mortifie the deeds of the body by the spirit, ye shall live. Rom. 8. 13.* The spirit which is of God, is ready to suffer, but the flesh resisteth. This Iesus signified by his answer unto *Peter*: when he shewed unto his Disciples, that he must goe unto *Ierusalem*, and suffer many things of the Jewes, and be slaine also, *Mat. 16. 28.* *Peter* tooke him aside, and said unto him: Master, pittie thy selfe, this shall not be unto thee. But Christ turned him back, and said unto *Peter*: Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that are of God, but the things that are of men. Here it is manifest that the reason of man doth flatly strive against the will of God. God will have us enter into glory by the crosse and persecution, but the flesh resisteth, and is troubled in afflictions. Moreover they that are endued



dued with the Spirit of God, doe rejoyce, if they be afflicted for God his sake, as it is written of the Apostles: They departed, as Luke saith, from the councell, reioycing that they were counted worthe to suffer rebuke for his name. Acts 5. 41. Wherefore Iames saith in his Epistle James 1. 2. My brethren count it exceeding joy, when yee fall into diuers tentations, knowing that the tryng of your faith bringeth forth patience: And let patience haue her perfect worke, that yee may be perfect and intire, lacking nothing. O how necessary is patience for a Christian man? that we may possesse our soules by patience, as Christ saith in Luke 21. 19. otherwise we shall lose them. Wherefore we must enter into a new kind of life, and if at any time calamitie cometh, we must not by & by, burst forth into euill speeches, and take it unpatiently, but we must alwayes lift up our heart to God, and bear his will with a patient mind, he will well deliver us in his time, when it seemeth good to him, and we must alwayes thinke, that he beareth a fatherly affection toward us, even when he sendeth persecutions, anguishes, afflictions, and aduersities, as the Epistle to the Hebrewes saith: Heb. 12. 5. Ye haue forgotten the exhortation, which speaketh unto you as unto children: My sonne dispeise not the chastning of the Lord, neither faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth: and he scourgeth every sonne that he receiveth. If yee indure chastning, God offereth himselfe unto you as unto sonnes: for what sonne is it, whom the father chasteneth not? If therefore ye be without correction, whereof all are partakers, then are yee bastards and not sonnes. God give us his diuine grace, that we may courageously passe these two and forty degrees, and with the Lord Christ be regenerate into a new life. Amen.

**A Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther upon the Hymne of Zacharias, commonly called Benedictus.**

(Luke 1. vers. 68. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, because he hath visited and redeemed his people.)

**T**hat godly man Zacharias speaketh here of things as already done, when he saith: he hath visited and redeemed his people, &c. For he was certaine of them: now the child Iohn was come, being about to begin to preach of our redemption, as the Angell had foretold of him, that he should go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elias, to turne the hearts of the fathers to the Children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just men, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord: this promise he knew should assuredly come to passe. Wherein this redemption consisteth, I thinke it is already sufficiently knowne unto you, namely in this, that God vi-  
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fireth and delivereth us. Which visitation and deliverance is accomplished neither by sword nor violence, but by the word alone where-  
 in consisteth more, then in the blood and death on the crosse: For  
 because of the word Christ shed his blood on the crosse. It was the  
 word that *John* preached, when he shewed the Lambe of God which  
 taketh away the sinnes of the world, that is, when he declared our  
 visitation and redemption, which Christ hath purchased with his  
 blood. This *John* was the first messenger which preached the Gospel.  
 Wherefore to us, to whom the Gospel was not before preached, it is,  
 as if *John* himselfe did now preach it, for now is first set forth unto  
 us redemption, sweet consolation, deliverance from sinnes, death,  
 hell, and all evill. To visit is nothing else, then to come unto us, to  
 bring and declare unto us the word of salvation, by which we are sa-  
 ved. *Zacharias* conceived so great joy and pleasure in his heart,  
 that he could not containe himselfe, but he must needs burst forth  
 into those words which in this Hymne he uttereth, not only because  
 of the infant newly borne, although even this brought great joy un-  
 to him, but also for that by the birth of this child he beholdeth a far  
 greater joy, forasmuch as he was a Messenger sent of God to preach  
 his word to the world. He rejoyceth therefore because of such a  
 word which he should heare, and for that he should be as it were al-  
 tered from an old man to a young man, and should become a scholler  
 of an infant now lying in the cradle, whom he confesseth to bee a  
 Prophet better learned then himselfe. Manifest naturall joy is here,  
 for that that infant was borne after a marvelous sort. Moreover here  
 is joy of the spirit, in as much as that infant should become a Prea-  
 cher of the word of God. And I am of that mind that I thinke that  
 there was never any father, which conceived so great joy of his child,  
 as this *Zacharias* did of his sonne being so marvelously borne by the  
 power of God, and for that especially in the time of old age, when  
 he was now neer unto death, he is made a father of so great a Saint,  
 which should be a master and teacher of the world. It is a delight  
 and pleasure unto us, if we beget a child that is sound, faire, and well  
 proportioned in body, that I may say nothing, what joy it would  
 bring, if our child should be an Apostle and Preacher of the word of  
 God to the world. Whatsoever ignominie therefore and contempt he  
 did suffer before when he was barrert together with his wife *Elisaber*,  
 he is now most abundantly recompensed with plentifull honour and  
 joy, so great blessings doth God bestow, if we patiently abide his  
 leisure. For if he at any time come, he commeth very rich and  
 plentifull in gifts, and doth give much more then we ever either wi-  
 shed or hoped for.

D a

Verse

Verse 69. *And hath raised up the borne of salvation unto us, in the house of his servant David.* These words are not spoken of *Iohn*, for that he is not a borne raised up in the house of *David*, for he was borne of the tribe of *Levi*. But Christ our Lord is of the house, and of the royall stock and blood of *David*. Wherefore *Zacbar* as doth not sing here, in the house of *Levi*, but that in the house of *David* a borne is raised and lifted up: and when Christ was not yet borne, he neverthelesse singeth so, as if he were borne, neither was the borne of salvation yet come; notwithstanding he knew by the revelation of the spirit, that it should forthwith come. An borne, among the *Hebrewes* signifieth power, confidence, dominion, and that whatsoever, wherein any man may trust, as we read, *Daniel* chap. 7. where the Prophet first seeth Kingdomes, then he beholdeth beasts, some having one borne, some two bornes. And he afterward interpreting himselfe, expoundeth them for kingdomes and Kings: and this is a phrase, and manner of speaking peculiar to this language. Now *Zacbarias* signifieth that Christ is our head, yet our God, whose kingdome is his borne, thus you have what a borne signifieth among the *Hebrewes*. He addeth: the borne of salvation or blessednesse, some kingdomes are famous in name and power, other or large, abounding with plenty of great treasures, much people, honours, and all temporall things: but this is called a kingdom of salvation, grace, life, righteousnesse, truth, and of every thing that pertaineth to salvation, whereby it differeth from all other Kingdomes. For albeit they be large, rich or mighty, yet are they counted the Kingdomes of death, for they that governe them must at the last fall, dye, perish, & leave their power & riches behind them. Neither ever was ther any worldly kingdome, which might be called a kingdome of life, where in is life, peace, and salvation, for only the Kingdome of Christ doth glory, and triumph in this title, in as much as God hath raised it up, that there may be nothing in it but salvation and felicity. Moreover I find nothing here spoken of manners and trades of life, or of workes: For this Kingdome consisteth neither in outward life nor workes, but in the borne, in Christ and his Gospel, this kingdome is ours, whereof yee have heard, that it is a Kingdom of grace, life, righteousnesse, salvation and mercy: So that whosoever is in it, although he be inferior to *Iohn* in holynesse, and far unlike Christ in perfection, yet he liveth in a Kingdome, wherein is nothing but salvation, and blessednesse, whereof also it hath and reserveth the name, you see what difference there is betwixt other kingdomes, and the kingdome of salvation, which God hath raised up. It is said more-

over

over, that this kingdome is raised up, in the house of *David*: but by what meanes was it raised up? Even by the holy Ghost, and by his word, he saith in the house of *David*, for it must be a kingdome in the earth, and yet a Kingdome of salvation: Now conferre these two one with another, the house of *David* is the trybe and stock of *David* who was a man, as the Subjects of this Kingdome. So that thou canst not say, that he here doth make mention of an heavenly kingdome among the Angells when as he doth nothing lesse, but he speaketh of a certaine kingdome which is among men, which live cloathed with flesh. *David* was a man, the Subjects of his kingdome were also men subject to death. For as the Scripture witnesseth, *Man that is borne of a woman, liveth but a shal'time*, he cannot passe the bonds appointed him: How is it then, that honour and dishonour come together in this Kingdome? what agreement and consent appeareth here, where mortall men are delivered from the power of death, where they that are worthy of death, enjoy life, the unhappie are happie, and they that are subjects to Satan, become the sonnes of God? In the reason hereof, I hope that you are sufficiently instructed, yea, I thinke that you understand it, as well as I my selfe. But because the text so requireth it, it must be oftentimes repeated. We have affirmed therefore, that a Christian which liveth in this Kingdome, shall never dye, for as much as he cannot dye, for Christ had therefore suffered death, that he might therefore overcome death, and deliver us from it. He tooke our sinnes also upon himselfe, that we might not need to beare them. Moreover he subdued, and overthrew Sathan, that we might not be subject unto him. Wherefore it is given to a Christian, that he can never dye, he can never be subject to sinne and the Divell, for that must needs be true which he saith, that he hath raised up a horne of blessednesse or salvation. And in whatsoever place that horne shall be, there is no access, neither of death, neither for sinne, nor the Divell, and that in the house of *David*. Wherefore a Christian, is both defiled, and yet without sinne, and free from Satan. How commeth this to passe? after this sort. Your brotherly charity, hath often times heard heretofore, that God leaveth in us an appearance and feeling of death and the Divell. So that my sinne disquieteth me, and troubleth my conscience, and would drive me unto desperation. Moreover the judgement of God, terrefieth me, death assaileth me, as if it would devour me. Sathan is at hand and seeketh to suppress me, God suffereth these to remaine, and taketh them not quite away. For this appearance must continue, that we

may perceiue and feele that we are nothing else of our selues but sinners, subject to sinne and Satan. And yet under this appearance lyeth hid, life, innocency, and dominion and victory over sinne, Satan, hell, &c. as Christ himselfe saith. *Mat. 16. Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not preuaile against it,* he saith not, they shall not assaile it, nor fight against it: for these two remaine to sinne and death. Now it is also expedient that I feele the biting of sinne, the terrour of the wrath of God, the horreur of death, yea, and death it selfe. But all this is certaine outward appearance before my sight and the sight of the world, which know and iudge none otherwise, but that sinne, death and Satan are present. Notwithstanding in the meane season under that assault and terrour the word and spirit are, encouraging me, preserving me, and assuring me, that God is not angry with me, that my sinne is forgiven me, that I shall never dye, nor be forsaken: Vpon this foundation and hope my heart doth wholly rest. And no man having such a confidence in God, remaineth under sinne, neither is drowned in death, but is made a conquerour of sinne and death. This is, not to preuaile or overcome, for that albeit Satan attempteth, yet he doth not get the victorie. We call the house of *David*, a mortall house, sinnefull, and subject to the Diuell, according to the manner of all flesh and blood, and yet notwithstanding the horne of salvation is raised up in the same, that men of that kingdome may enjoy salvation and felicity. Hereby yee see that this kingdome is the kingdome of faith, which cannot be touched nor outwardly perceived of any, which one cannot shew to another, but every one must have it in himselfe, that when he shall draw neere unto death, shall feele sinne, or even see death before him, he may then in faith lay hold on this kingdome, and beleeeve that his sinnes are forgiven him. For Christ therefore dyed, that thou mightest be in this kingdom of faith. Wherefore sinne shall encounter with thee in vaine, death is taken away, Christ is with thee, who can hurt thee, who can doe any evill unto thee? Here life and death, sinne and innocencie, Christ and Satan doe fight one with another, but Christ, life, and innocency doe overcome and conquer. This is soone spoken, but not so easilie felt, yea the contrarie surely is rather felt. Wherefore if thou wilt esteeme and consider this Kingdome according to the judgement of the world, thou shalt utterly erre and be deceived. The world calleth that a good and peaceable kingdome, where all things are quiet, prosperous and goe well forward, where is safety, peace and innocency outwardly. But here is the kingdome of salvation and

grace

grace, although it alwayes appeare otherwise. Wherefore all these things are to be understood in spirit and faith, and not to be judged according to the person or outward appearance. Neither ought it to seeme strange that this kingdome doth flourish in the midst of sins, the force of Satan and death, whereof *Zacharias* here singeth even from the bottome of his heart, and knoweth well how it cometh to passe, faith and the spirit revealing it. Concerning sinne I have seen or knowne none in whom it is not. Whomsoever thou settest before thee, sinne will by and by appere. *Paul* a most holy Apostle affirmeth of himselfe, that hee seeleth sin in his members. *Will*, saith he, *Rom. 7. 18.* *is present with me, but I find no meanes to performe that which is good. For I doe not the good thing which I would, but the evill which I would not, that doe I.* He wished indeed to be free from sinnes, but yet he could not but live in them. And I such like also are also desirous to be exempted from sinnes; but that can by no meanes be brought to passe, we doe only repress and keep them under: when we have falne into sinne, we rise againe. But as long as we are clothed with this flesh, and bear the burthen thereof about with us, so long sinne is not extinguished nor can be wholly subdued. We may well goe about and endeavour to subdue it, notwithstanding old *Adam* will lead his life also, untill he shall dye and come unto the grave. What shall I need to say any more? The Kingdome of Christ is a certaine speciall kingdome, wherein every one of the Saints is compelled to make this confession: Almighty God, unto whose power all things acknowledge themselves subject, I confesse my selfe to be a miserable sinner, revenge not, I beseech thee my old iniquities. All also must sing this song: Our father, &c. forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. Other righteous and holy ones, which know no measure or end of their righteousness and holiness, doe understand nothing hereof, and therefore this Gospell is not preached unto them, seeing that they thinke the Kingdome of Christ to be such, that there is no sinne at all in it. but that all things in it are cleane and pure: they require such a Christian as is wholly cleane from all filth of sinne, and without sinne as Christ himselfe, such a one they shall never be able to find. Now he is a Christian, who being a sinner, confesseth himself a sinner, who hateth the feeling of sinne, striving against it from his heart. He is not a Christian which thinketh that he hath no sinne, neither seeleth any. But if thou knowest any such, he is an Antichristian, and not a true Christian. The kingdome of Christ therefore consisteth among sinners, it is establish'd there where he hath

set it, that is, in the house of David. Yea, let David himselfe before your eyes, and yee shall find him to have been a sinner : who notwithstanding is bold to glory, that he is a servant acceptable to his Lord. There is none of the faithfull which ought to be ashamed of this manner of praying unto God, or of any other not much unlike unto it : Lord forgive us our sin : is it therefore true that they have sin, because they say so ? yea truly, for if they should lye, they should be the children of Satan. But godly Christians are weary of this life, greatly desiring the life to come. Now it is not given unto them in this earth to goe so far, that they may say : We are subject to no vices, we are cleane from all sin : if they should goe so far, it is Satan that deceiveth them. Notwithstanding they are sorrie for their sins, and doe lament them, yet it grieveth them to the heart, that they must beare the miserable burthen of this flesh, and they cry out together with St. Paul Rom. 7. *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?* This thrich and cry all the faithfull doe give, for that feeling sinne, they doe most earnestly desire to be delivered from it. And in this feeling, and knowledge of sin, the kingdome of Christ consisteth, so, that even in sin there is no sinne. That is, albeit I doe both acknowledge and feelee sinne, yet salvation and the kingdome doe so firmly abide in my conscience, that God saith unto me : *I will forgive thee thy sinne, for that thou hast faith, and beleevest in Christ my especially beloved Sonne, who was delivered to death for thee, neither shall thy sinnes hurt thee.* Others which feelee not their sinnes, but trust in their workes, and complaine nothing of their faults and offences, thinking themselves cleane : such are given to Satan and not received or admitted into the kingdome of Christ : For they which are partakers of this Kingdome cannot be without Conflicts and Tribulation.

And that I may speake more plianly, reckon I pray thee, any of the Saints, whom death doth not trouble : yea I know thou shalt not find one, which is not afraid, and trembleth not at the horrible sight of death. But the conscience taketh comfort hereby the Prophet David, who saith : *The Lord hath chastened and corrected me, but he hath not given me over unto death : Psalm. 118. 18.* It fighteth against us indeed, but prevaieth not. Thus a Christian wrapped in sinnes, is both under sinnes and above sinnes, and at the last notwithstanding obtaineth the victorie. After the same sort also must he have to doe with Satan, with whom he must wrastle all his life, and at the last overcome him. So in the world also he must suffer many conflicts and troubles, and yet at length become victor.

For

For although it be a kingdome of Salvation, which hath neither rest nor quietnesse, but suffereth the force of hell, death, the divell, sin, and all manner of adversitie and tribulation, yet they which be in it, doe with an invincible courage endure, and at length overcome all evils. But God therefore permitteth these things, that our faith may be exercised, and shew forth it selfe. Moreover that is a pleasure to the conscience, and bringeth unto it comfort and joy, that it hath such a kingdome, that it may say: Blessed be the Lord God, who hath visited and redeemed us, and hath raised up a kingdome in the house of *David*. That is, for that he visiteth us by his word, delivereth us from sins, and maketh us conquerours over death and Satan.

☞ Thus yee have heard both that a kingdome is raised up in the house of *David*, and also that a Christian is both dead and yet alive, is innocent in the midst of sinnes, and although he be subject to Satan, yet notwithstanding hath dominion over Satan. For both are true, for that sinne, death, hell doe assaile the flesh, but doe not overcome, forasmuch as this kingdome of salvation triumpheth over them all. Wherefore as it were with a certaine great boldnesse or confidence he calleth it a horne, that is a strong and puissant kingdome: Which hath no rest or truce, but being assailed of many and strong enemies, is alwayes diligently occupied in defence of it selfe, and doth notably repell the force of the enemye. So a Christian laying hold on this horne, overthroweth sinne, death, and Satan. Neither consisteth this horne in our strength, neither are we makers thereof: for God hath made and raised it up by the ministry of his word, whereby we are saved. Wherefore *Zacharias* so singeth, that his song hath respect not to his owne sonne, but to Christ. Yea he celebrateth this Kingdome as pertaining to the Jewes only, and declareth that it shall be glorious, and maketh no mention of the Gentiles, how they also should come unto it, as beside others, *Simeon* in his song, the beginning whereof is, *Lord now lettest thou, &c.* did prophesie, that we Gentiles also are chosen into that kingdome. But here he foretelleth of a Kingdome raised up of God to the Jewes, even a kingdome of salvation and blessedesse, and that in the house of his servant *David*. Wherefore he saith moreover: *Vers 70. As bespake by the mouth of his holy Prophets: which have been since the world began.*

☞ Therefore he hath raised up this Kingdome, that he might confirm his promise, whereby he had foretold that he would sometime raise up a Kingdome, &c. And now that time is come, wherein he will fulfill that his promise. So *Zacharias* reduceth the horne of salvation, the



the Kingdome of Christ, to the old Testament, that out of it he may bring witnessers of so strong & puissant a Kingdome. For the Prophets from the time of *David* did all prophesie, that the seed of *David* should have a Kingdome in the earth, yet a spirituall Kingdome: and above the rest *Esay* and *Ieremiah* foretold, that it should be such a Kingdome, that the government thereof should consist in the spirit and word, to these especially *Zacharias* hath here respect. The other as *Osee*, *Micheas*, and the rest, doe speake of the same Kingdome, but not so manifestly. Verse 7. *That he would deliver us from our enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us.* The Evangelist hath hitherto generally rehearsed, what that Kingdome of Christ is, whereof the Prophets prophesied. Now he speaketh of it also, but particularly, declaring wherein it consisteth. First in this, that he delivereth us from the hands of our enemies, yea and from all them that hate us. Yee see here and understand, most dearely beloved, that this verse doth witness and most plainly declare, that we which are his people and Kingdome, doe live amongst enemies, and that no other is to be looked for of us, but to be hated of them: That also the force, qualitie, and nature of this Kingdome consisteth in this, that it delivereth us out of the hands of all them that hate us, as the Prophet *David* saith, *Psal. 110. The Lord shall send the rod of thy power out of Sion: be thou ruler in the midst of thine enemies.* And *Psal. 45. Thine Arrowes are very sharpe, even in the midst of the Kings enemies.* It is a delight unto Christ that his Kingdome is set in the midst of the fight, yea and in the midst of the haters thereof. These things are written for our comfort, that we which mind to serve under the Prince of this Kingdome, be so instructed, that we looke for no other then is here prescribed and set forth unto us: that we seeke not here to get unto us the favour of the world, neither that we serve the world, and labour to have no enemies therein. For the words of *Zacharias* declare that it is the quality of this Kingdome to deliver from enemies. Now if it delivereth us from enemies, and as it were draweth us out of the hands of them that hate us, surely it cannot be a kingdome of peace, but such a Kingdome as is subject to the hatred and mallice of the world. As ye see at this day, that our enemies beare a deadly hatred unto the light, which hath a little shined forth, thanks be to Christ therefore. No man is any where so hated as a Christian. Both the Pope, and the furious Bishops with their false Apostles, also the raging Princes, moreover the holy, learned, and wise of the world, all at this day doe most bitterly hate Christians. Neither are they content, that they be killed and slaine, but they would

would have them extinguished and utterly rooted out, that there may be no memorie of them, as they thinke, left among men. And this is the state, these are the badges, and cognisances of Christians: that when Satan by his Ministers persecuteth us, he thinketh quite to root us out. This verse also giveth us to understand, that Christ is our King, that he may save and deliver us out of the hands of our enemies: which he notably performeth, and sheweth his power in the midst of the world, in the midst of the force of flesh and Satan, when as peace and quietnesse is no where left to a Christian, but in Christ alone. This also we must make, that there is not one bug many, which assaile and persecute Christians: but yet that we shall not therefore be destroyed, for asmuch as we have one, which is stronger both then the world and the Prince thereof as *Iohn* saith. Now whereas he promiseth us, we know certainly, that he both will and is able to performe: we shall indeed feeble the assault, but he will not suffer us to be destroyed or overcome, so that we hope and trust in him. It followeth moreover: *Verse 72. That he might shew mercy towards our fathers, and remember his holy covenant. Verse 73. That is, the oath which he sweare to our father Abraham that he would give us.* He will deliver us, not only from all evill both of body and especially of soule, but also from our enemies, Satan, and men, and as a Christian must be as it were overwhelmed with all evils together, so also he shall be againe wholly delivered from all evils. And he sheweth that this grace and blessing was promised to their fathers. Such is the manner of the Apostles also, that they oftentimes have recourse to the old Testament, as I have said before, that God spake and promised by the mouth of the Prophets, &c. even as *Zacharias* doth in this place. Some man may now say: They are dead, how therefore will he shew mercy unto them? Again, what need is there to rehearse, that he would shew mercy to the fathers, when as it is declared in the Prophets? But this is therefore done, that the truth of God may be shewed forth, and may be also approved unto us, that we should not be ignorant, that those things are not due to our merits. In the first booke of *Moses* is mentioned, *Gen. 22. 18.* how God promised to *Abraham*, that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. That is, that by Christ should come peace, grace, and blessing to all nations. Which promise was deferred so long a time, that it appeared, that it was in vaine and abolished. So unwise, as it seemeth to the world, doth God shew himselfe in his matters, as though all things went backward. Notwithstanding howsoever it was delayed and seemed, yet it is fulfilled and performed

med whatsoever was promised to *Abraham*, and God hath not only delivered him from his enemies, but hath bestowed upon him all good things, ye hath given himselfe unto him, and all that he hath. And all this is therefore done, for that (as *Zacharias* here saith) this mercy and goodnesse was before promised and confirmed by an oath unto them, which are long since dead, when as we yet were not. He is mercifull therefore and favourable, not because of our meritts, as though he did owe it unto our righteousness, but of his only grace, favour, and mercy. These are horrible thundrings against our meritts and workes, that we cannot glory, that we have delivered our selves from sinnes, or that we have deserved his goodnesse, and the preaching of the Gospell. No, it is not so. Here is no place for boasting; but this text saith, that thou, O Lord, didst promise certaine thousandes of yeares before I was borne, that thou wouldest doe it. Who did then desire him, that he would give us those things, when he had determined with himselfe to give them? And upon this promise the Prophets are bold and doe stay themselves, for by it we attaine unto true goodnesse, that the mouth of every one may be stopped, that he that will glory, may glory in the Lord. For thus the Lord may say; that thou livest in my kingdome, that thou enjoyest my goodnesse and grace, it is not to be imputed to thee, but unto me: I promised, and determined with my selfe to fulfill my promises, thou being ignorant thereof. And here the mouth of every one is stopped. So at this day also none of us, unto whom, thanks be to God, the Gospell hath shined, can glory that we obtained it by our owne meanes, labour, endeavour, or good conversation. For those which are counted the best workes, and the most excellent studies are disallowed and overthrown, as to celebrate masse, to joyne himselfe to this or that hypocriticall sect, which they call an order, &c. These the Gospell condemneth and rejecteth, and how can I attaine to the Gospell by that which it rejecteth? Wherefore this standeth sure and certaine, that all that we have, is of the meer grace and goodnes of God, so that with this honour & praise we may confesse, that we have deserved far otherwise, namely hell fire, if besides this he bestoweth any thing upon us, it is the gift of his grace and goodnesse. And this is that which *Zacharias* saith, that it, was foretold by the Prophets, and both promised and confirmed by an oath to the Fathers, that he would performe unto us the covenant made to *Abraham*. Thus he saith to *Abraham*, *Gen. 22. 16.* By my selfe have I sworne, saith the Lord, that in blessing, I will blesse thee. And in thy seed, &c, Which

Which words the Prophets diligently held, marked, and handled, and alwayes trusted unto them, for that he doth here solemnly sweare, that he might wholly assure us, that he would poure forth his blessing upon us. And now the time is present, the houre is come, wherein he hath sworne, that salvation should come unto us, as it is declared. *Mark. 16. Goe yee into all the world and preach the Gospell to every creature: but he that shall beleve and be baptizd, shall be saved: but he that will not beleve shall be damned.* Men surely have not merited it, no not *Abraham* himselfe who was not made partaker of the promise, seeing that he dyed long before the fulfilling thereof. In spirit, in deed, and faith he was partaker of it, but he lived not so long, till the Gospell was revealed, to the whole world. The promise therefore was made unto him, although, as I have said, he looked not for the fulfilling thereof in this life. That is, his life was not prolonged untill the preaching of the Gospel in the whole world, although in faith he obtained the Gospel for himselfe. Wherefore it cannot be said, that that promise was due to his meritts, otherwise he must have lived in the earth untill the fulfilling thereof, and a due price or reward must have been paid unto him. But now the performing of the promise was after his death, so that every one must needs confesse, that that promise was not made to *Abraham* because of his meritts. Again it cannot be said, that the Gentiles which enjoy this promise, have obtained it by their meritts, which then were not. God promiseth to the fathers and performeth not, he performeth to the Gentiles, to whom notwithstanding no promise was made, who all at that time were not. God will alwayes retaine to himselfe his honour, and be the same God, although the wicked world cannot be so perswaded. He chastneth, reproveth, rebuketh, provoketh, stirreth, allureth, doth whatsoever is to be done, but the worldlings rob him of his honour, and attribute it to themselves, that is, they will not acknowledge, that whatsoever they possesse or have, it cometh unto them by the only grace of God. When therefore we glory of such good things, and acknowledge not God to be the author and giver of them, we make our selves as God, and him as our servant. So he is dishonoured, and the honour attributed unto us. *¶* But albeit we make marchandize of his honour, yet he hath affirmed in the Scriptures, that he will keepe his honour and glory only to himselfe, that so he may be acknowledged to give all things of his meere and only grace. These things he that beleeveth, doth also receive them: he that doth not beleve shall at length receive his due reward. *Zacharias* saith moreover.


Ver.

Verse 74. That we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without feare. Verse 75. All the dayes of our life, in holinesse and righteousnesse before him. He hath defined the nature and property of this Kingdome: that is, the covenant made with *Abraham*, that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed, &c. Which words of blessing, thus saith he, I will interpret unto you, that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we may serve him without feare all our life long in holinesse and righteousness before him. Which to the world and our flesh savoureth not well. For the world thus murmureth here: I had thought that he would have given us some precious thing, as a purse well stuffed with money, a rich wife, faire and beautifull children, goodly houses, and whatsoeuer the world is delighted in. But now I perceive it to be otherwise, I heare that we must without feare serve him in holinesse and righteousness, and so please him. Wherefore it shall be meet that we apply hereunto spirituall eyes and eares, that we may more rightly consider and understand the wordes. Whereas he saith, that he will deliver us from all our enemies, it is againe thus to be understood, that this kingdom is placed in the midst of enemies and notwithstanding that it is not therefore destroyed, but that alwayes all the enemies and adversaries thereof are overcome. We must understand also that the deliverance from our enemies tendeth hereunto, that we should alwayes obey him that delivereth us, without any feare. And this is a Christian thing, and an amiable kingdom, that a Christian shall leade his life without feare. Howbeit God hath bestowed this upon us, that we should hereafter serve him alone. The words *without feare*, include in them, that we shall quietly enjoy the good things of this present world, and of the world to come. For a Christian is sure and certaine of the forgiveness of his sinnes, although he as yet feeleth them, as we have said a little before. He is certaine that death hath no power in him: that Satan doth not overcome him: that the world cannot prevaile against him. Such a heart is without all perill and feare, and plainly free from them. Which doe not thou so understand, as though we doe not feele sinne at all, but that we are greatly grieved when sinnes trouble us, when the image or sight of death terrifieth us, when as being reproached and slandered of the world, we stand as destitute, and have none in this earth, to whom we may turne us or resort for succour, but God alone. These things indeed are felt, but they doe not prevaile nor overcome us: for the heart notwithstanding remaineth safe and quiet in God. So povertie also is felt, when thou art pinched with  
hunger

hunger, and hast not where-withall to fill thy belly, to maintaine thy wife and bring up thy children, nor any certaine place where to dwell and abide, but all these things shall not hurt thee: thou must ask of God whatsoever thou needest, and serve him without feare, as our present text declareth. But herein wee doe for the most part behaue our selves not as Christians, wee judge after our owne affection and sense, according as the world doth blame us, or report evill of us. Also when our fields have no corne, no mony is in our purse, we think our selves utterly destitute and forsaken. But a true Christian with shut eyes and eares saith with Paul speaking to the Galatians, *Gal 2 & 6.* O flesh, sin, death, ye are dead unto me: and I againe am dead unto you, that Christ may live in me. The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. That is, the world hath no care or regard of me, and my preaching and life is mocked and scorned of it. But with the same measure that thou measurest unto me, I will measure to thee againe: if thou despisest me, I also will despise thee: if thou makest no account of me, I againe will make small account of thee. What care I, if the world hate me, when as I displease not him that dwelleth in heaven? If this hatred continue even daily, if sinne rage, and the world talke and prate many things, what then? Let it doe so untill it be weary, I will passe over these things as if I heard them not. This is indeed to forsake the world, and to die unto it, to live without feare, to be occupied about no other thing, but that which is according to Gods will, so speake nothing at all but that which shall please him, and which I shall know to be agreeable to his word: that I may live so, and doe those workes, Which I know certainly are exceptable before him, that in my whole life whatsoever I doe either outwardly, or inwardly, I may be certaine that I seeke his glorie, and endeavour to fulfill his will. So I am separated from the world and notwithstanding do still live in the world. No man is lesse in the world then a sincere Christian: and againe, no man is more occupied and hath to doe with the world then an entire Christian. That is, the world doth more intensively look unto him, and Satan more often and vehemently assaileth him, then him that is ignorant of Christ, of grace, and of faith. Christ and Paul had experience hereof: they had combats and conflicts with the world: they were troubled and molested, yea the whole world was against them. Againe, a true Christian is not in the world, albeit the world rage and fret cruelly against him: for he alwayes trusteth in God, and saith: Lord, I am thine, thou shalt deale well with me, grant thou that my matters may goe forward according

cording to thy will, only be thou on my side, and I shall be in safety.  
*All the dayes of our life.* All our life long, that is continually,  
 without ceasing. *In holinesse and righteousness before him.* Here St.  
*Luke* devideth righteousness and holinesse into two sorts: of which  
 one is acceptable before God; the other before him is of no value: *So*  
 whereby we have to understand, that both the righteousness and  
 holinesse of God are in no estimation before the world, even as the  
 world is wont nothing to esteeme God, and againe God little to  
 esteeme the world. For that which God calleth just, the world  
 calleth unjust: and that which it calleth right, God calleth crooked:  
 and so these two Champions are continually at variance between  
 themselves. That which God calleth holy, seemeth to the world di-  
 vellish and unrighteous. VVherefore he comforteth us here, declar-  
 ing that there be two sorts of righteousness and holinesse: One,  
 which we ought to observe diligently: Another which we ought to  
 avoid. Hethereto it hath been the chiefe holinesse and righteous-  
 nesse of all, which could be invented, to runne into Monasteries, to  
 put on monkish apparrell, to be shaven, to weare a hempen girdle,  
 to give himselfe to fasting and prayer, to be cloathed with hair cloth,  
 to lye in woollin garments, to observe an austere manner of living,  
 and in a sum, to take upon him monkish holinesse and religion. And  
 thus sticking in a colourable shew of good workes, we knew none o-  
 ther but that we were holy from top to toe: having regard only to  
 workes and the body, and not to the heart, where we were full of  
 hatred, feare and incredulitie, troubled with an evill conscience,  
 knowing almost nothing rightly of God. Then the world cryed o-  
 penly: O that holy man: O holy and chaste woman, which have in-  
 cluded themselves within the walls of Monasteries, which day and  
 night kneeling upon their knees say many rosaries, as they call them.  
 O, what holinesse is there, where even God himselfe dwelleth, where  
 the holy Ghost the comforter abideth present? These things the  
 world boasteth of, and greatly esteemeth. But beside these they doe  
 not marke, how they pray with no earnestnes of heart, how they teach  
 and instruct no man, how they give nothing to any, but catch unto  
 themselves both the blood and sweat of the poore, and leave true  
 sincere workes undone. This righteousness and holinesse the world  
 extolled, which notwithstanding stinketh and is wholly uncleane  
 before God, *for* which he will have even to be unknowne unto us, yet  
 the world refuseth to admit any other. But there is another man-  
 ner of righteousness then this whereof God esteemeth and accepteth,  
 which also we must consider, now it is of this sort: It consisteth not

in

In a gray garment, not in a black or white coule, but in a pure conscience. To wit, when I beleve, that Christ is my salvation, and that my workes can prevaile nothing hereunto: but that he doeth all things which God hath regard unto. Then I say no more: a gray garment is holy; a red garment is prophane, for asmuch as I know, that not in a gray or any other garment, but in Christ all things consist. For no man can attaine to this, that a gray garment may cleanse his heart from filth, or that a Monasterie may purifie it: for it is necessary that God only purifie the heart by faith, and the holy Ghost, as Peter witnesseth *Act. 15*. When the heart is now pure, the house is unto it as the field, and the field as the house: The market is asmuch esteemed of it as the Monasterie, and contrariwise. Neither remaineth there unto me any worke, place, or garment, which I count prophane: for all things are alike unto me, after that holinesse hath fully possessed my heart. That even God saith unto me: Thou art Godly, I am thy father, thou art my sonne. And herein we ought to persist, that we be holy, and without feare doe obey and serve him. Here the titles and badges of a Christian are scene, and this is his cognisance, to wit, that being holy, he is the Minister of God without feare. But what sinner is there which dareth challenge to himselfe this title? Let one come forth, which dareth avouch himselfe to be godly, righteous, holy, and the servant of God, destitute of no good things either of mind or body. Now he that cannot glory of these things, is not a Christian. For of these things must a sincere Christian be partaker. But what lettereth that one dareth not challenge to himselfe this title? Even a timorous conscience: for we alwayes feeble sinne, and our life is ever fraile. I see nothing but an honest life, although God require this also of us, yet he will not be content therewith, but there is need that there be yet a certaine higher thing, that I dare be bold to say:  Lord God maker of the whole world, I am certaine that I am holy before thee, and am thy servant, not for mine own sake, who doe as yet feeble sinnes in my self, but through Christ, who hath taken away my sinne, and made satisfaction for me. These things surely I ought to glory of, if I be a true Christian. But this seemeth difficult and hard: God admitteth no sin, my fearefull and weake conscience is against me. How am I his servant, when as notwithstanding I feeble in my selfe, that I serve the divell, and doe not know that I am holy? I speake not here of the common sort of Christians, such as I, and such like are: but of sincere Christians, which have a good conscience, and in whose heart the spirit of God abideth, whose conscience albeit be fraile and weake, and they feeble their sinnes, yet they are inforced to say: Howsoever sinne is, yet I know no sin by my selfe, neither am I subject to death and hell, and for this cause they strive, and at the last overcome, that therefore they would even dye, in that confidence. But I finde it farre otherwise, if I set my life before my



sight. Here life and the word must be separated farre assunder. If thou wilt consider life, I will set also before thee the lives of *St. Peter, Paul,* or *John*, thou shalt find even them not to have lived without sinne. When thou desirest to be holy before God, trust not to thy life, unlesse thou wilt perish for ever. For thou must trust to only mercie and grace, and not to life or workes, otherwise thy case will be very ill. Wherefore our heart must be so affected that it say: Lord, if thou shouldest call me to an account, I should not be able either by life or workes to stand in thy sight, no although I were even *John the Baptist*. Nevertheless therefore I glory that I am godly, and thy servant, for that thou doest give unto me continually, and also for that, as thou hast promised to *Abraham*, thou doest for thy Christs sake, vouchsafe to shew thy mercy unto me; if so be that I of my selfe be not godly and righteous, yet he is godly and righteous for me; if I be prophane, he is holy; if I be not the servant of God, he is the servant of God; if I be not without feare and carefulnesse, yet he is void of all feare and carefulnesse: that so I may as it were transerre my selfe from my self, and peirse into him, and glory, that in Christ and by Christ I am good. Thus he will have us to glory, that we are Godly and holy, but not by our own meritt, for we must giorie of our selves, as of most desperate wretches. Add that this may be plain, mark our life, consider our good conversation, and manners, weigh how foolishly men apply themselves to the Gospel, that I am almost in doubt, whether I should preach any more or no. For as soon as these things are taught in a sermon, that salvation consisteth not in our workes or life, but in the gifts of God, every one is slow to do good, no man will live an honest life, and be any more obedient, they falsely affirm every where, that good workes are inhibited. Nevertheless God requireth of us, that we lead an honest life outwardly, and he that doth not so shall at length find his due punishment. Now if it happen that we live godlyly and honestly outwardly, Satan by and by frameth his wickednes. Neither do I know at this day how to order my self in this matter, not because of my own person, but because of life. For if we preach of an honest and godly life, the world by and by furiously attempteth without judgment, to build ladders to heaven, which God neither can, neither will; by any means suffer; againe, a dishonest and ignominious life doth not become Christians, neither doth a delicate life become them. What therefore must we then do? they which have respect only to an honest and fair life, it were better for them to be adulterers & adulteresses, & altogether to wallow in the myre. And yet notwithstanding God will not have us to lead our life filthily & dishonestly. For neither can he suffer that, adjudging thee even unto hel therefore, if thou so do. And if thou lead an honest life, thou wilt sicken in it, and arrogate unto thy self, which againe he cannot suffer. Thou must therefore so provide that thou remaine in the  
middle

middle path, declining neither to the right hand, nor to the left, and that thou lead a quiet, faire, and amiable life in the sight of the world; which also may be acceptable before God, and yet that thou doe not therefore so greatly esteeme it, nor count so of it, as though thou dost merrie any thing of God thereby. Thus a Christian continueth the holy servant of God without feare, not by his good workes and holy life, but by the grace of Christ. But he that affirmeth that he is holy by his works, is blasphemous against God, robbeth God of his honour, and denieth Christ, for whom it were better, that he were ten times an homicide, or an adulterer, then that he should thereby affirme himselfe to be a Christian, yea godly and holy; for he doth plainly dishonor Christ, and it is as much as to affirm that there is no Christ: for he is therefore called Christ, for that he is our grace, mercy, redemption, and holines. If I should not attribute to the divine mercy, that God himselfe doth save me, what should this be else, but to say, that he is neither holy nor blessed? Wherefore if I be a Christian, I must confesse, that I am holy and a Christian for this cause, for that Christ himselfe is holy. And albeit my conscience doth reprove me of sin, yet I must still persever in this, that his holines is greater then my sins. Thus I must live honestly outwardly, but inwardly rest and trust in him alone. It followeth moreover how Zacharias turneth his speech to the child, and saith: *Verse. 76. And thou child shalt be called the Prophet of the most High: for thou shalt goe before the face of the Lord to prepare his wayes.* This shall be thy office: Thou shalt be the first, and shalt first begin: that is, thou shalt be the Prophet of the most High: But what manner of prophecie shal that be, how shal it be done: After this sort: Thou shalt be the forerunner of the Lord, and shalt prepare his wayes. When any Prince commeth, certain go before him, to prepare way and place for him, and say: give place, depart out of the waye. Iohn doing the like, runneth before and cryeth unto the people: go aside, turne out of the way, give place, the Lord himselfe commeth. Such a servant is Iohn, whom the Lord by and by followeth. Such things no Prophet at any time hath spoken, but they have prophesied of these things, that a Prophet should sometime come, which should erect a kingdome that should continue for ever, &c. But all dyed, not one remained, which did behold this being alive. But this Prophet doth live even at that time, when the Lord himselfe commeth, and by and by followeth him. For the Gospel was begun to be preached, Baptisme was begun to be ministred, by the coming and ministrie of Iohn, who ceasing, Christ began, both almost in the same yeare. Now what shall be his offer? This truly, to prepare a way for the Lord. Which preparation is nothing else, but to bring people to the Lord the Saviour. Christ is the grace, gift, King and horne of our Salvation. This Lord and King no man receiveth, unlesse he be first humbled

humbled, that he thinke nothing of himselfe. For he cannot otherwise attaine unto Christ, neither can stand together, to receive the grace of God by gift, and also to meritt the same. *Iohn* therefore in this part teacheth men nothing else, but they are sinners and altogether nothing. He now which acknowledgeth himselfe, and feeleth himselfe a sinner before, yea, and to be nothing, well understandeth the voice of *Iohn*, which is, prepare yee a way of the Lord : Give place to him : He is at hand that followeth me, who is greater then I, him ye shall heare, him ye shall obey. The other office of *Iohn* which followeth, is, that he bringeth men to the knowledge of salvation, and sheweth with his finger that pascall Lambe, that taketh away our sinnes, that he may fasten them to the crosse with himselfe and abolish them. Whereof *Zacharias* now goeth on to speake: *Verse 77. To give knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of their sinnes.* That is, thou shalt begin the office and minister the word, whereby is taught and learned how one is saved. Which salvation or blessednesse consisteth in this, not how we may be famous through great abundance of riches, glorie, and power in earth, as the Iewes have hitherto understood it : but that wee may obtaine remission of sinnes, and be made partakers of the grace of God. Now where remission of sinnes is, there is no meritt, no reward or satisfaction, otherwise it could not be called remission of sinnes. So that this knowledge is, to understand, how God forgiveth us our sins without workes and meritts, and saveth us by mere grace and mercy, as it followeth : *Verse 78. Through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the day spring from on high hath visited us.* Here it appeareth that they which teach and observe lawes, workes, and meritts, doe strive both against the mercy of God and knowledge of salvation. For he saith not that forgiveness of sinnes hath come by the prayers and workes of the fathers, or of any of the Saints, but through the bottomelesse mercie of God, which *Luke* calleth the tender mercie, and such mercie as cometh from the most inward affection and bowells. Notwithstanding this forgiveness of sinne, which cometh unto us by mercie, is not without meritt, although it cometh to passe without our meritt : but a Mediator cometh between, who hath in our stead deserved it for us, which is Christ our Lord. For God would that satisfaction should be made unto him for our sinnes, and that his honour and law should be performed, here we were able to doe nothing. But Christ alone both was able, and satisfied for us who of the infinite mercy of the father, was sent for the same cause, and that to us, that he might dispatch it. Therefore he saith, Through which infinite and bottomelesse mercy the day spring from on high hath visited us. Without all doubt it was no meritt, but only unmeasurable mercie, that Christ came to us, and merited and obtained for us such remission of sinnes unto eternall salvation

vation. Now he calleth him, *the day spring from on high*, which signifieth unto us his divinitie. And this is his meaning: on high, that is, above all creatures, where nothing is higher, but height alone, there is Christ in his divinitie, as the morning or day spring. For he proceedeth from the father, as the beames doe from the sunne, whereof we have elsewhere spoken at large. *Verse 79. To give light to them that sit in darknesse, and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet in the way of peace.* Many of the fathers understood this of Lymbus, as they call it: but Luke agreeth here with the saying of *Esay*, where he saith: *The People that walked in darknesse, have seene a great light, &c.* His meaning therefore is this: Christ therefore came, that he might be the light of the world, and by the Gospell might inlighten mens hearts, and allure them to himselfe, which were held captive under Satan in the blindness and darkness of incredulitie, that so he might guide our feet in the way of peace, that is, he might governe our conscience well, quietly and cheerfully in the kingdome of grace, that we may be afraid neither of Satan, neither of sinne, death, hell, nor of any adversitie, who heretofore have rested, part of us in filthy vices, part in good workes, notwithstanding we could on neither side enjoy any quietnes or peace, but were compelled to dispaire under Satan, and the feare of death, neither did we know how to find that way which leadeth unto peace, according to the saying of the fourteenth Psalme: *The way of peace have they not knowne, &c.* Thus yee have heard how *Zacharias* doth in most goodly and fit words most lively paint out the Gospell and kingdome of Christ, with all the fruits, colours and conditions thereof, that it is a word and kingdome of grace, of forgiveness of sinnes, also a kingdome of peace, joy, quietnesse, salvation and all goodness. God grant that we may thoroughly know and feele the same. Amen.

**A Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther of the Meditation of Christs his Passion.**

**F**irst, some doe thinke upon the Passion of Christ, that they are incensed with anger against the Jewes, and doe envie against wretched *Judas* in songs and reproachfull words: and thus they are content, and thinke this to be sufficient, even as they are wont in lamenting the case of other, to take pittie on them, and to accuse and condemne their adversaries. But that cannot be called a remembrance of the passion of Christ, but rather of *Judas* and *Judas* his wickednesse. Secondly, some have noted in their minds divers commodities, and fruites proceeding of the meditation of Christs passion, that saying which is ascribed to *Albertus* being commonly in their remembrance, that it is better to thinke upon the passion of Christ superficially or once, then if one should fast the space of a whole yeare, and dayly in praying goe over the whole Psalter, &c. That they follow hitherto, being blind and justly stumbling, contrary to the true fruit of the Lords passion, Moreo-

ver they seeke their own things therein, and therefore they bring with them images, books, letters and crosses. Some also goe so far, that they thinke they shall make themselves safe from waters, terrors, fire, and from all danger, as though the Lords suffering should be without suffering in them, contrary to the quallitie and nature thereof.

Thirdly, some have compassion of Christ, lamenting and weeping for him as being an innocent man, like unto the woman which followed Christ from *Ierusalem*, who were reprehended and admonished of him, that they should weep for themselves and for their children. Fourthly, some so call to mind the passion of the Lord, and so consider Christ, that inwardly they are sore afraid, yea their reason also or understanding is turned into a certain astoniednesse or bashfullnes. Which feare notwithstanding ought to proceed from hence especially, in that we should be put in mind therby of the wrath and immutable severitie of God prepared for sins and sinners, forasmuch as he would not grant to his only begotten and beloved son that sinners should be absolved and pardoned, unlesse he did make so great a satisfaction for them, as he speaketh by *Esay* chap. 53. 8. *For the transgression of my people have I smitten him.* What shall come unto the sinner, when a son so exceedingly beloved is smitten? It must needs be that there is an unspeakable and a most serious and earnest matter, where so great and excellent a person doth descend to doe good unto him, and suffereth and dyeth for him. 5. ly. resolve deeply in thy mind, and doubt not a whit, that thou art he which so tormented Christ, forasmuch as thy sins were most certainly the cause thereof. Thus *S. Peter* in the 2. of the *Acts*, did strike and terrifie the *Jewes* as it were with a certaine lightning, when as he said unto them generally, *whom you have crucified*, so that the very same day three thousand men were greatly terrified, and being pricked in their hearts said unto the Apostles: *Men and brethren what shall we doe?* Wherefore when thou considerest that his hands were peirced with nayles, thinke that it was thy work: when thou remembrest his crown of thornes, perswade thy self that it was thy wicked cogitations, which caused it, &c. 6. ly. Think with thy self, that whereas one thorn pricked Christ, thou oughtest worthily to be pricked with an hundred thousand thorns, & that without intermission, yea & much more grievously: & that whereas one naile peirced the hands and feet of Christ, thou oughtest to be grieved and molested with many more and far more sharp nayles continually, even as it shall come at the last unto those, in whom the passion of Christ hath not been effectual but frustrate. For Christ who is the truth it selfe, will lye to no man, will delude no man, and that which he attempteth must needs be a matter of exceeding great importance and wonderfull high.

7. ly. Such feare *Bernard* had conceived hereof when he said: I did play abroad in the street, and in the Kings privie chamber sentence of death

was given upon me. The Kings only begotten son hearing this, laid off his diadem and came forth, clothed in sackcloth, his head sprinkled with ashes, and bare foot, weeping and crying out that his servant was condemned to death. I beholding him suddenly comming forth, am amazed at the strangenesse thereof, I aske and hearken after the cause. What shall I doe? shall I play still and delude his teares? Alas (saith he) it is no time now to play, it is no time to be secure, when so weightie a matter is in hand. So he bad the women that they should not weep for him, but for themselves and for their children, and he adjoyneth the cause: For if they doe these things to a green tree, what shall be done to the dry? as if he said: learne what ye obtaine by my passion, and howsoever things fall out, yet this is true and known among you, that the whelp is sometime smitten, that the banddogge or mastive may be terrified. So also the Prophet hath spoken: *All kindreds of the earth shall waile before him.* He said not, they shall bewaile him, but, *they shall waile before him.* Moreover they were sore afraid, of whom it is before spoken, so that they said unto the Apostles Acts 2. *Men and brethren, what shall we doe?* Sly, That this affection may be wrought in us, the Lords passion is very diligently to be considered of and meditated upon, forasmuch as the most certain profit thereof doth much consist herein, that a man may come to the knowledge of himselfe, and tremble and be troubled before himselfe; whereunto he that doth not come, hath not yet attained unto the due profit of the Lords passion. For the passion of Christ hath this proper and naturall vertue, to make a man like unto him, that even as he was grievously tormented both in body and mind for our sins: so we also to imitate him must be afflicted in the knowledge of our sins. Howbeit the matter is not here done in many words, but in deep cogitation and earnest weighing of sins. Take a similitude: as thou hast great cause to feare and tremble, if, when some malefactor is condemned, for that he hath killed the son of the king or Prince, thou in the mean season, singing and playing securely as being innocent, art terribly apprehended & convicted, that thou didst suborn the homicide: So thou oughtest to become much more fearfull when thou dost resolve in thy mind the Passion of Christ. For albeit the wicked Jewes be now judged of God and disappeared, yet were they ministers of thy transgression, and thou for a certainty art he, which with thy sins hast crucified and slain the son of God, as it hath bin said, sly. He that feeleth himselfe so hardned and dull, that the passion of Christ doth not terrifie him, neither bring him unto the knowledge of himselfe, is in an ill and lamentable case: for Christs passion is not effectuall in him. But now it is a hard thing for thee to be occupied in these things, and earnestly bent to the meditation of them: wherefore thou shalt pray God that he will mollifie thy heart, and give thee grace profitablie to meditate upon the passion of Christ,

because it cannot in any wise be, that the passion of Christ should be inwardly and rightly thought upon and considered of us, unless God inspire it into our hearts. Yea, neither this meditation nor any other doctrine is therefore set forth unto thee, that thou shouldest boldly rush upon it of thy selfe to fulfill it, but that thou shouldest first aske and desire the grace of God, that thou mayest fulfill it, not by thine own strength, but by Gods grace. For hereof it commeth, that they of whom it is before spoken, doe not meditate on the passion of Christ, aright, because they desire not helpe of God thereunto, but rather trusting unto their own strength, and following their owne invention, meditate upon it altogether after the fashion of men, and after a slender and unfruitfull manner. Tenthly, if one should through the grace of God meditate rightly upon the passion of Christ, by the space of one day, or of one houre, yea or the space of a quarter of an houre, we would faithfully pronounce of him, that he hath done better, then if he had pined himselfe with fasting the space of a whole yeare, or had run over the Psalter every day. For this manner of meditation doth as it were change a man, and almost regenerate him anew like unto baptism. Then indeed the Lords passion doth his naturall, due and noble office, it killeth the old Adam, it driveth away all pleasure, joy and confidence, which may be had of creatures, even as Christ was forsaken of all, yea even of his father. Eleventhly, seeing that such a thing is not in our own power, it commeth to passe that we doe often times aske it, and yet doe not by and by obtaine it, notwithstanding we must not therefore dispaire or cease. For that is sometimes given for which we have not prayed, and that sometimes is not granted for which we have prayed, even as it is the pleasure of God, and as he knoweth to be best for us, for God will have this gift to be free and without constraint. Twelfthly, when as a man thus knowing his sinne doth wholy tremble in himselfe, he must especially endeavour, that sinnes doe not still remaine in his conscience, otherwise meete disparation will come thereupon, but he must shake them of and cast them upon Christ, and so unburthen his conscience. Therefore see againe and againe that thou doe not that which perverse men doe, which within the secrets of their heart doe vex and disquiet themselves because of their sinnes, and strive with them, that by good works or satisfactions, by farre going on pilgrimage, or else by pardons they may become safe, and may be made free from sinnes, which cannot be. And (alas) such a false confidence in satisfactions and pardons hath prevailed very farre. Moreover, then thou dost cast thy sinnes from thee upon Christ, when thou firmly beleevest that he suffered and was wounded for thy sinnes, and that he hath payed the full rancome and satisfaction for them, as *Esaias* saith chap 53. *The Lord hath thrown upon him all our sinnes.* And *St. Peter* saith: *who his*

own selfe bare our finnes in his body on the tree. 1 Pet. 2. 24. St Paul saith: He hath made him to be sinne for us, which knew no sinne, that we should be made the righteousness of God in him. In these and such like authorities thou must repose thy hope with all boldnesse, and that so much the more, as thy conscience doth more grievously vex and trouble thee. But if thou shalt not doe this, but presumest that thou shalt bee quiet by thy contrition and satisfaction, then thou shalt never come unto quiernesse, but at the last shalt fall even into desparation For our sins kept and medled within our conscience, and set before the eyes of our heart, are farre stronger then we, and doe live immortally. But when as we see them laid upon Christ, and to be victoriously conquered of him by his resurrection, and doe confidently beleeeve this, then they are dead and brought unto nothing. And yet being laid upon Christ, they must not remaine so: for they are swallowed up in the triumph of his resurrection. So saith St. Paul: Christ was delivered to death for our finnes, and is risen againe for our justification, That is, he hath taken upon him our finnes in his passion, and hath thereby payed the ransom for them, but by his resurrection he justifieth us, and maketh us free from all sinne, if so be that we doe beleeeve this. If thou canst not attaine unto this faith, thou must as it is a little before said, resort unto God by prayer, for asmuch as this gift is in the hand of God only, who bestoweth it when and upon whom it pleaseth him. Thou mayest also stirre up thy selfe hereunto: first, not now considering the passion of Christ outwardly, (for that hath now fulfilled his function and hath terrified thee) but rather by peircing inwardly & cōtemplating his most loving heart, with how great love towards thee it is replenished, which brought him hereunto, that he did beare thy conscience together with thy finnes with so great and painefull difficultie. So thy heart shall wax sweet towards him, and the strength and boldnesse of thy faith shall be increased. Then having entred unto the heart of Christ, ascend higher even unto the heart of God, and consider that the love of Christ could not have been shewed unto thee, except the will of God by his eternall love had so appointed, whereunto Christ by his love toward thee did obey. There thou shalt find a divine heart, a good heart, a fatherly heart, and (as Christ saith) thou shalt be drawne unto the father by Christ. There thou shalt understand this saying of Christ: So God loved the world that he gave his only begotten Sonne, that whosoever beleeveth in him, should not perishe, but have everlasting life. For this is to know God aright, when he is understood of us, not under the name of power or wisdom (which is a terror unto us) but under the name of goodnesse and love. Then faith and confidence may stand constantly, and man himselfe is as it were regenerate a new in God. When thy heart is thus established in Christ, so that thou art now become an ene-

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mie of sin, & that by love and not through fear of punishment, then afterward the passion of Christ ought to be an example unto thee in thy whole life, and is now to be considered of in thy mind after a farre other manner then before. For hitherto we have considered it as an outward thing which should work in us, but now we will weigh it so, that some thing is to be done of us also. For examples sake: when griefe or infirmities doth molest thee, think how light these are being compared to the crown of thornes and the nailes of Christ. When thou must either doe or leave of that which is grievous unto thee to doe or leave of, think how Christ was taken and bound, and led up and down. When pride tempeeth thee, consider with thy selfe how thy Lord was mocked, and reputed among theeves. When lust and pleasure prick thee, thinke with how great sharpnesse the tender flesh of Christ was torne with whips, and peirced through. When anger, envie, desire of revenge move thee, think with how great teares and cryes Christ did praye even for his enemies, roward whom he might more iustly have shewed himselfe sharp and rigorus. When sadness or any adversitie whatsoever either corporall or spirituall troubleth thee, strengthen thy heart and say: well, why should not I also suffer a little sorrowfullnesse, when as my Lord did sweat blood in the garden for anguish and heavinesse. Surely he were a sluggish and an ignominious servant, who, his master lying at the point of death, would be held from him with a soft and easie bed. Lo, thus a man may find strength and remedie in Christ against all crimes and offences. This is truly indeed to meditate upon the passion of Christ: these are the fruites of the Lords passion, in which he that doth after this sort exercise himselfe, doth surely without comparison better then if he heard all passions or all superstitious Masses. Such also are called true Christians, which doe so represent the life and name of Christ in their life, as *S. Paul* saith: *Gal. 5. 24. They that are Christs, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts with Christ.* For the passion of Christ is not to be handled in words and outward shew, but indeed and veritie. So *S. Paul* admonisheth us: *Heb. 12. 3. Consider him that endured such speaking against of sinners, lest ye should be wearied and faint in your minds.* And *S. Peter* saith: *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arme your selves likewise with the same mind.* *1 Pet. 4. 1.* But such meditation is now grown out of use and begun to wax rare, where-with notwithstanding the Epistles of *Peter* and *Paul* are most abundantly replenished. **A Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, of the fruit and vertue of Christ his resurrection.**

**V**VE have heard in the treatise of the Lords passion, that it is not sufficient to know only the bare historie thereof. After the same manner it is not enough here to know, how and when Christ rose again, but both the use and the profit as well of his passion as of his resurrecti-

on must be preached and known, to wit, what Christ obtained for us by them. For where the only deed of the historie is preached, it is a fruitless preaching and without all fruit, which both Satan and the wicked doe as well know, read, and understand, as we doe. But when as the use of them is preached, and whereunto they profit, that indeed is a fruitful, and wholesome Sermon, and full of sweet consolation. Wherefore Christ himselfe hath declared the use and profit of his passion and resurrection, when he thus talked with the women *Mat. 28. 7. Be not afraid: Goe and tell my brethren that they goe into Galile, and there shall they see me.* And this is the first word, which they heare of Christ after his resurrection from the dead, whereby he confirmeth all his sayings, also all his benefits shewed unto them before, to wit, that they should come unto us also that should beleve in him, and pertain only to the beleivers, for that here he calleth not only the Apostles his brethren, but also all them which beleve in him, although they doe not see him visibly as the Apostles did. He doth not defer untill we pray unto him and call upon him, that we may be made his brethren. Let any of us now come forth, and boast of his merrit, or of the strength, whereby he is able to merrit any thing. What had the Apostles merited? *Peter* denied Christ thrice. All the rest of the disciples did flie away from him, they did persevere and stand by him, even as the hare carrieth with her young ones, he might have called them runaways, and forsakers of their standing in the midst of their conflict, yea traiters and wicked men, rather then brethren. Wherefore of meere grace and mercy this word was brought unto them of the Matrones, which the Apostles themselves did then well perceive, and we also do thoroughly feele, when we are set in the midst of sins, and are overcome of damnation. This word therefore is full of all consolation and comfort, that Christ careth for such wretched men as we are, yea and that he doth call us his brethren. If so be that Christ be our brother, surely I would faine know what good things we shall want. As therefore the case standeth among carnall brethren, so doth it stand here. They that are german brethren by consanguinity, do use goods common among themselves, having the same father, the same inheritance, otherwise they were not brethren. So we also possesse common good things with Christ, enjoying the same father, the same inheritance, which inheritance is not diminished by parting it, as worldly inheritances are, but is alwayes made more abundant: for it is a spirituall inheritance, A corporall inheritance, when it is distributed into divers parts, is made smaller, but in this portion of the spirit, the case is such, that he that hath gotten part thereof hath obtained the whole. What is therefore the inheritance of Christ? In his power are life and death, sinne and grace, and whatsoever is contained in heaven and in earth, his are eternall verity, strength, wisdom, righteousness. All power is given unto him, he hath rule over all things,

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
over hunger and thirst, prosperitie and adversitie, &c. he reigneth over all things that can be thought, whether they be in heaven or in earth, spirituall or corporall, and that I may speake at once: all things are in his power, as well eternall things as temporall. Now if I shall cleave unto him by faith, I shall be made partaker of all his good things, and shall not obaine a part of the inheritance only, but I shall possesse even with him everlasting wisdom, eternall strength. My bellie shall not be grieved with hunger, sinnes shall not oppresse me, neither shall I be afraid of the face of death, neither shall I dread the sight of Satan, neither shall I want the plenty of any thing that is good, even as he wanteth it not. Hereby now we may easily understand the sayings uttered commonly in the Prophets, and especially in the Psalmes, as where David saith, Psal. 34. *The Lyons doe lack and suffer hunger, but they that feare the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good:* and where he saith in another place: *The Lord knoweth the wayes of the righteous, and their inheritance shall endure for ever. They shall not be confounded in the perillous time, and in the dayes of dearth they shall have enough.* And againe: *I have been young and now am old, and yet saw I never the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.* All which things Christ bringeth with him, for that we are, and are called his brethren, not because of any meritt but of meer grace. If we would print these things in our heart, that we might throughly feele them, it should goe well with us; but they goe in at one eare and out at another. This is that whereof St. Paul so greatly glorieth, Rom. 8. *As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sonnes of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage to feare againe: but ye have received the spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father: The same spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: if we be children, we are also heires, even the heires of God, and heires annexed with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified with him.* Moreover this title ascendeth so high, that mans mind is not able to comprehend it. For unless the spirit the comforter did impart this grace unto us, no man should ever be able to say, Christ is my brother. For reason cannot be bold to say, albeit one repeat it in words very often, as the new spirits doe. It is a higher thing then that it can be so spoken, for except the heart feele it, as it is requisite it should, it shall be nothing but only flatterie. But if thou feele it inwardly in thy heart, it will be so excellent a thing unto thee, that thou wilt much rather say nothing of it, then to speake and talke of it, yea by reason of the greatnesse of so good a thing, thou wilt perhaps doubt as yet and be in an uncertaintie whether it be so or not. They which only cry out thus: Christ is my brother, are fanaticall spirits, who vainly pronounce words without any fruit. The case standeth far  
other

otherwise and farre more marvelously with a true Christian, so that he is thereby enforced to be amazed, neither dareth he either say or confesse any thing sufficiently thereof. Wherefore we must endeavour, that we do not heare this only with fleshly cares, but that we feele it in our heart, for then we will not be so rash, but we shall be forthwith carried into an admiration thereof. True and sincere Christians enter into the viewing and feare of themselves, thinking thus. O wretched and defiled creature, which am drowned in sinnes, am I now made worthy, that the sonne of God should be my brother? how doe I miserable wretch attain to such a thing? Thus he is by and by astonied, and doth not well understand the thing. But a great studie and endeavour surely is required, that a man may beleeve this, yea if it were felt, as it ought in very deed, a man should forthwith dye thereupon. *¶* For he cannot understand it according to his flesh and blood, and the heart of man in this life is more narrow and straight, then that it is able to comprehend so great things. But in death, when the heart shall be stretched out, then I say we shall try what we have heard by the word. In the Gospel of Iohn chap. 20. Christ doth farre more plainly declare unto *Mary Magdalen* this use and fruit both of his death and also of his resurrection, when he saith: *Goe unto my brethren and tell them: I ascend unto my father and your father, unto my God and your God,* this is one of the most comfortable places whereof we may glory and boast. As though Christ should say: *Mary*, get thee hence and declare unto my Disciples, which did flie from me, which have throughly deserved punishment and eternall condemnation, that this resurrection of mine is for their good, that is, that I have by my resurrection brought the matter to that passe, that my father is their father, and my God is their God. They are but a few and very short words indeed but they containe great matter in them, namely, that we have as great hope and confidence reposed in God, as his owne sonne himselfe. Who can comprehend such exceeding joy, I will not say, utter it? that a wretched and defiled sinner may be bold to call God his father, and his God even as Christ himselfe. The author of the Epistle to the *Hebrewes* chap. 2. did well remember the words of the Psalme, and weighed with himselfe how it speaketh of Christ, who, as he saith, is not ashamed to call the beleevers, brethren, saying: *I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the Church or congregation will I sing praises unto thee.* If any worldly Prince or noble man should humble himselfe so low, that he would say to a thiefe or robber, or to one that is infected with the French Poxe thou art my brother, it would be a certaine notable thing which every one would marvell at. But whereas this King which sitteth in glory at the right hand of his father, saith of some poore man: this is my brother, that no man layeth upon the bosome of his breast, neither

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doth any man consider of it in his mind, & wherein notwithstanding our chiefe comfort and confidence consisteth against sinne, death, the diuels, hell, the law, and against all sinister successe of things as well of the body as of the mind. Moreover, for asmuch as we are flesh and blood, and therefore subject to all kinds of aduersitie, it followeth, that the case should stand so also with our brother, otherwise he should not be like unto us in all things. Wherefore, that he might be made conformable and like unto us, he tasted and had experience of all things even as wee have, sin only excepted, that he might be our true brother, and exhibit himselfe openly unto us. Which the Epistle to the Hebrewes doth lively set forth, chap. 2. where it saith: *For asmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himselfe likewise took part with them, that he might destroy through death, him that had the power of death, that is, the devill, and that he might deliver all them, which for feare of death were all their life time subiect to bondage. For he tooke not on him the Angels nature, but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoued him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be mercifull, and a faithfull high Priest in things concerning God, that hee might make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he suffered and was tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.* The profit, use and fruit of the Lords passion and resurrection, S. Paul hath gathered very briefly and as it were into one short sum, when he saith *Rom. 4. Christ was delivered to death for our sins, and is risen again for our justification.* Whereof thus much at this time shall suffice. **A Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther of the good Shepheard.** [*John 10. Verse 11. to the 16. Iesus said unto the Iewes: I am that good shepheard, &c.*]

**T**His text is full of consolation, which in a goodly parable setteth forth Christ our Lord, and teacheth what manner of person he is, what be his workes, and of what affection he is toward men. Nevertheless it cannot be understood, that by comparing together light and darknesse, day and night, that is, a good and evill shepheard, as the Lord also doth in this place. Ye have now often times heard that God hath instituted and ordained in the world two manner of preachings: One is, when the word of God is preached, which saith, *Exo. 20. Thou shalt have none other Gods before me. Also: Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not commit adulterie, thou shalt not steale,* and doth also threaten, that he which doth not keep those precepts shall dye. But that preaching doth iustifie no man. For although a man be thereby compelled to shew himselfe godly outwardly before men, notwithstanding inwardly his heart is offended at the law, and had rather there were no law. The other ministry of the word is the Gospel, which sheweth where that is to be received, which the law requireth, it neither urgeth nor threatneth, but allureth mēgently, it saith not: doe this or that, but it saith thus

thus : Goe too, I will shew where thou mayest receive and take, where-  
 by thou mayest become righteous : Behold, here is  Iesus Christ, he  
 will give it thee, Wherefore these two disagree one with another,  
 as much as to receive and give, to exact and reward. And this difference  
 is to be well understood and marked. To hardned and untractable men,  
 which feele not the Gospel, the law is to be preached, and they are so  
 long to be urged, till they begin to be molified and humbled, and do ac-  
 knowledge their disease, which when it is done, there is then place to be-  
 gin to preach the Gospel. These two sorts of preachings were instituted  
 and ordained of God, besides these there are other which were not or-  
 dained of God, but are traditions invented by men, ordained of the  
 Pope and his Prelates, wherewith they have perverted the Gospel. These  
 are not worthy to be called either shepherds or hirelings, but they are  
 those which Christ calleth thieves, robbers and wolves. For if we will rule  
 and guide men rightly and well, that must needs be done by the word of  
 God: whereby if it be not done, we surely labour in vaine. Furthermore  
 Christ intreateth here of that second ministrie of the word, and describ-  
 eth of what sort it is: he maketh himselfe the chiefe, yea the only shep-  
 heard, for that which he doth not feed, doth surely remaine unfeed. Yee  
 have heard that our Lord Iesus Christ after his passion and death was  
 raised from the dead, is entred into, and placed in immortallitie, not  
 that he might sit idle in heaven, and rejoyce with himselfe, but that hee  
 might receive a Kingdom, might execute the function of a governour  
 and King, of whom all the Prophets, yea and the whole Scripture doe  
 speake very much. Wherefore he is to be acknowledged to be unto us  
 continually a present governour and ruler, neither must we think that  
 he is idle in heaven, but that he doth from above both fill and governe  
 all things as *Paul* saith *Eph. 4.* who hath an especiall care of his king-  
 dom, which is the Christian faith, hereupon it must needs be, that his  
 kingdom do flourish among us here in earth. Of this kingdom we have  
 elsewhere said, that it is so ordained, that we all increase every day & be-  
 come purer, and that it is not governed at all by any force or power, but  
 by outward preaching alone, that is by the Gospel. And this Gospell  
 cometh not from man, but Iesus Christ himselfe brought it, and after  
 ward put it into the hearts of the Apostles, & their successors, that they  
 might comprehend it, and into their mouths that they might speak and  
 publish it. Hereby is his Kingdom governed, wherein he so reigneth, that  
 all the power thereof consisteth in the word of God. Now whosoever  
 shall hear and beleve this, do pertain to this Kingdom. Moreover this  
 word is afterward made so effectuell, that it giveth all things which are  
 necessarie to man, and bringeth a certain abundance of all good things  
 which may be had. For it is the power of God which is able to save  
 every one that beleeveth, as *Paul* witnesseth *Rom. 1.* When thou  
 beleevest


belvest that Christ dyed for thee, to deliver thee from all evill, and so cleavest unto the word, it is sure and certaine that no creature is able to overthrow thee. For as none is able to overthrow the word, so none is able to hurt thee, when thou stickest unto it. By the word therefore thou dost overcome sinne, death, Satan, hell, and thither thou must resort and flie, where the word is, that is, to eternal peace, joy, and life, & briefly, thou shalt be made partaker of all such good things as are promised in the word. Wherefore the government of this kingdome is marvelous: the word is published and preached through the whole world, but the power thereof is very secret, neither doth any man marke that it is so effectually, and that it so much profiteth them that beleeve: howbeit it must be felt and tasted in the heart. We therefore of the ministerie are able to performe no more, then that we are the mouth of our Lord Christ, and the instrument whereby he openly preacheth the word. For he suffereth the word to be published abroad, that every one may heare it. But faith maketh that it is felt inwardly in the heart, yea and it is the secret work of Christ, whosoever any knoweth that it is his duty, and is also willing to doe according to his divine will and good pleasure. But this may be the better perceived, we will now increase of our text, wherein Christ first saith: *I am the good shepheard.* And what is a good shepheard? A good shepheard, saith Christ, giveth his life for his sheep. And I leave my life for my sheep. Here the Lord declareth what his Kingdome is, bringing a goodly parrable of the sheep. Yee know that it is a beast of all living creatures most foolish and most simple, so that thereupon it is commonly spoken as a proverb, if we have to speake of a simple one: He is a sheep. Neverthelesse it is of that nature more then other living creatures, that it quickly knoweth the voice of his shepheard, neither followeth it any beside his own shepheard, being alwayes of that quality that it cleaveth to him, and seeketh for helpe of him alone, being not able to helpe it selfe, neither to feed it selfe, neither to heele it selfe, nor keep it selfe from the wolves, but doth wholly consist in the helpe of Another. Christ therefore bringeth the quality and nature of the sheep in manner of a parrable, and transformeth himselfe into a shepheard, whereby he doth very well shew, what his kingdome is, and wherein it consisteth, and his meaning is this: My kingdome is nothing else, but that I may feed sheep, that is, miserable, needy, and wretched men in the earth, which doe well perceive and feelee, that they have no help or counsell any other where, but in me alone. But that we may declare this more plainly, we will add hereunto a place out of *Ezekiel* chap. 34. which speaketh of evill shepheards that doe contrary unto Christ, and saith: *Ought not the flocke suffer themselves to be fed of the shepheards? why therefore doe you feed your selves? Ye have eaten the milke of the sheep, ye have clothed your selves*

selves with the wool, the best fed ye have slaine, but my flock have ye not  
 fed. The weake have ye not strengthened, the sick have ye not healed, the  
 broken have ye not bound together, the driven away have not brought a-  
 gaine, the lost have ye not sought, but with force and cruelty have ye ru-  
 led them. And now my sheepe are scattered, for that they are destitute of  
 shepherds, yea all the beastes of the fields devour them, and they are disper-  
 sed over all mountaines, and over the whole earth. That which he here  
 saith is well to be marked: his very meaning in this place is, that he  
 will have the weake, sick, broken, abjects, and lost, to be strengthened,  
 healed, cured, sought, not spoiled and destroyed. These things  
 ye ought to doe, saith he to the shepherds, but ye have done none  
 of them. Wherefore I my selfe (as he afterwards saith) will deale thus  
 with my sheepe: *That which is lost will I seeke againe, that which is dri-  
 ven away will I bring againe, and to that which is not well will I give a  
 remedy and heale it.* Here thou seest that the Kingdome of Christ is such  
 as hath to doe with those that be weake, diseased and broken, and hath  
 care of them to help them. The preaching whereof indeed is very full  
 of comfort, but this is wanting in us, that we doe not thoroughly feele  
 our misery and weakenes, which if we felt, we would forthwith run  
 unto him. But how did those shepherds behave themselves? They ruled  
 in rigour and straightly exacted obedience of the law. Moreover, they  
 added their own traditions, as they doe also at this day, which if they be  
 not kept, they cry out, and condemn him that transgresseth them, so that  
 they doe nothing else, but urge more and more and command their  
 own inventions. But this is not to feede well or to governe a soule, as  
 Christ saith, who him selfe is not such a shepherd, for by such manner  
 of feeding none is holpen, but the sheepe are utterly lost as we shall un-  
 derstand. Now we will handle the place of the Prophet in order. First  
 he saith that the weake sheepe are to be strengthened, that is, the con-  
 sciences which are weake in faith, and have a sorrowfull spirit, and are  
 of a faint courage, are not to be enforced, that it should be said unto  
 them: This thou must doe, thou must be strong. For if thou be so weake,  
 thou art ordained to eternall punishment: This is not to strengthen the  
 weak. Thus saith Paul Rom. 14. *Him that is weake in the faith receive  
 unto you, and intangle not consciences.* And by and by he addeth, Rom.  
 15: *We which are strong ought to beare the infirmities of the weake.*  
 Wherefore they are not to be severely compelled, but to be comforted, that  
 although they be weake, they may not therefore despaire, for afterwards  
 they shal become stronger. Esaias the Prophet did thus fore-speak of Christ  
 chap. 41. *A brused reed shall be not breake, and the smoking flax shall be  
 not quench.* The brused reed signifieth miserable, weake, and brused con-  
 sciences, which are easily so shiken, that they tremble, and lose hope  
 and trust in God. With these God doth not forthwith deale rigorously  
 and



and after a violent manner, but he dealeth gently with them, lest hee breake them. Moreover the smoking flax, which doth as yet burne a little, and nourisheth more smoke then fire, are the same consciences, which ought not againe to dispaire, for he will not utterly extinguish them, but alwayes kindle them, and more and more strengthen them. Which truly to him that knoweth it, is a great comfort. Wherefore he which doth not gently handle weak consciences after this sort, doth not without doubt execute the office of a true shepherd. Afterward the prophet saith: *That which was diseased, yee ought to have succoured.* Who are those diseased ones? They which in their manner of living, and in their outward workes have certaine diseases, and vices. The first pertaineth to the conscience when as it is weak: the other to the manners or conditions of life, when as any being carried with a wilfull mind and wayward braine, doth offend here and there, to wit, by wrath and other foolish doings, as even the Apostles sell sometimes grievously. Such as are so vitious in the sight of men, that they are an offence to others, and are judged obstinate and wayward, God will not have to be reiected and dispaired of. For his Kingdome is not ordered after such a manner, that the strong and whole only should live therein (which pertaineth to the life to come) but Christ is therefore set in it, that he may have a care of such and helpe them. Wherefore albeit we are so weake and sicke, notwithstanding we must not so dispaire, that we should say, that we are not in the kingdome of Christ, but the more we feele our disease, so much the more we must come unto him, for he therefore is at hand that he may remedie and heale us. Now if thou be weake and oppressed with faintnesse, feeling great affliction, hereby thou hast gotten a greater occasion to goe unto him, and say on this manner: Most sweet Christ, I therefore come unto thee because I am a sinner, that thou mayest helpe and iustifie me: yea very necessitie doth compell thee hereunto. For the greater thy disease is, so much more needfull is it for thee to be healed. And Christ himselfe requireth the same of us, and doth allure us to come unto him boldly and cheerfully. But others which are not such shepherds, doe thinke that they shall make men righteous, if they exact much of them and urge them much, whereby they only make that which is evil *and* worse as we see it to be done at this day, whereas it is come to that disorder, that all things are most miserably brought out of course, as in this place the Prophet saith. *The broken have yee not bound together.* To be broken is, as when ones legge is broken, or a wound some where else given him. That is, when as a Christian is not only weake and diseased, that he stumbleth sometime, but also runneth into so great tentations, that he breaketh some part, and so is brought to that passe, that he falleth and denyeth the Gospell, after the manner of Peter, who did forswear Christ. Now if any should so stumble,

that

that he should be compelled to goe back, and be utterly cast downe in mind, nevertheless we must not as yet cast him of, as though he did never any more pertaine to the Kingdom of Christ: for we must leave Christs property to himselfe, that his Kingdome may remaine unto himselfe meere grace and mercy, whose desire is to helpe them only, which are grieved with their calamitie and miserie, and doe greatly desire to be delivered from it. That his kingdome may altogether abound with comfort, and he himselfe be the comfortable and gentle shepheard, which provoketh and allureth every one to come unto him. And all this is done by the Gospel, whereby the weake are to be strengthened, the sick to be healed. For it is such a word as is fit for all distresse of consciences, giving abundant comfort to all, that none dispaire although he be a great sinner. Christ therefore alone is the good shepheard, which healeth all sorts of diseases, and helpeth them that are fallen: which he that doth not, is not a shepheard. The Prophet thus goeth forward: *That which was driven away, yee have not brought againe.* What is that that is driven away? The despised soule, which is scorned and contemned, that it is thought to be done in vaine, whatsoeuer Christian doctrine is bestowed upon it. Notwithstanding Christ doth not yet suffer, that it should be dealt roughly with. His Kingdome is not compassed with so straight bounds, that only the strong, whole and perfect doe flourish therein, for this pertaineth to the heavenly life to come,  now in this kingdome only grace & sweetnes must abound. As God promised to the children of Israel, Exod. 3. that that appointed land of Canaan should flow only with milke and hony, even as *Paul 1 Cor 13* affirmeth, that upon those members of the body, which we think more unhonest, we put more honesty on. He concludeth: *The lost have yee not sought.* That is lost which seemeth to be condemned, of the returne whereof there is scarce any hope. Of which sort in the Gospel were Publicans and harlots, and at this day they, who have not so much as a sparke of godlinesse, but are untractable and unruly. Neither are they notwithstanding to be left, but all meanes are to be assayed that at the last they may be reclaimed and brought againe into the right way. Which *St. Paul* estoones did, as when he delivered two of this sort unto Satan, *1 Tim 1. I have delivered them unto Satan that they might learne not to blaspheme.* And *1 Cor. 5. I have determined,* saith he, *to deliver them to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Iesus.* Them he cast of as condemned, and yet notwithstanding did not dispaire of them. Christ therefore is so to be preached, that he rejecteth no man although he be weake, but that he willingly receiveth, comforteth and strengthneth every man, so that he alwayes appeareth to be the good shepheard. Hereupon it commeth to passe, that men willingly resort unto him, and that it is no need any more to compell them. The Gospel so allureth, and maketh

them willing, that they come with a certaine love and pleasure, and with all boldnesse, Whereupon a desire and love unto Christ is increased in them, so that they doe any thing willingly, who before were to be urged and compelled. If we be constrained, we doe grudgingly and unwillingly, which God plainly abhorreth. But when as I shall perceive that God dealeth so lovingly & gently with me, my heart is as it were ravished, so that I cannot stay my selfe, but I must even run unto him, leaving all other things, whereupon afterward all pleasure and joy casueth unto me. Now consider how great an evill it is, when one iudgeth an other. The Kingdom of Christ, as we have heard, is so ordained, that it healeth and iustifieth only sick and miserable consciences, wherefore all they are farre deceived, which have regard only to the strong and whole. It is great therefore and very effectuall knowledge whereby Christ is well knowne. It is grafted in us by nature to be altogether evill and wicked, and yet notwithstanding we would have every one to be honest, we earnestly regard strong Christians, not looking therewithall to the sick and weake, thinking them not to be Christians, if they are not strong, and iudge others evill, if they be not altogether holy, when as we our selves in the meane season exceed the rest in naughtinesse. Now the cause hereof is our most corrupt nature, and our blind reason, which will measure the kingdome of God according to her own opinion, whereby it thinketh that those things are uncleane before God, which seeme uncleane unto it selfe, wherefore that opinion must be removed out of our mind. For if thou hast very much regard thereunto, thou shalt at the last come into the mind to think: alas, what shall become of me, if all Christians must be such namely, strong, whole, and Godly? When shall I once attaine so far? And so thou shalt bring thy selfe into such a perplexity, that thou shalt hardly ever attaine unto true comfort and ioy. Thou therefore must be so affected, that thou, say: Most gracious Iesu, although I find my selfe altogether weake, diseased, and in a wretched state, yet I will not therefore cast of all hope, but will flie unto thee, that thou mayest succour me, For thou only art the shepheard, and the good shepheard, such a one I am perswaded that thou art, wherefore I will not despaire or be discouraged, although I come unto thee being voyd of workes. We must therefore bestow our dilligence that we may wisely and well know Christ, that in his kingdome only the weake and diseased are conversant, and that it is nothing else, but as it were an hospitall, wherein only the sick & feeble doe lie, of whom a care must be had. But few men have this knowledge, for this wisdom is exceeding hard to be attained unto, so that it is wanting even unto them sometime, who have the Gospell and the spirit, neither can any wisdom come unto men which is greater then it. Wherefore, albeit men look into the Scripture, which setteth forth the kingdome of Christ,

Christ, affirming it to be most precious, neverthelesse they have not such a care what the words signifie, neither doe they marke that true wisdom is hidden therein, which excellerh our wisdom by many degrees. For it is not Christian wisdom to have to doe with men which are accounted wise, and skilfull, and to make mention, and talke of them, but to be occupied among the unwise and them that lack understanding, not that delight and pleasure should be taken thereof, but that they may come from sin and foolishnesse to righteousness and sound understanding. Hereof it appeareth that Christian wisdom doth consist in this, not that we look aloft, and consider those things which are high and wise, and behold and see our selves in them as it were in a glasse, but that we look to those things that are below, and marke that which is humble and foolish. He which knoweth this, let him give thanks unto God. For by this knowledge he becommeth such a one as is able to prepare and apply himselfe to everie thing which is in the world. But yee shall find many, yea even among them that preach the Gospell, which are not yet come thus farre. Hitherto we have been so instructed and accustomed, that none must come unto Christ, before he be altogether cleane, thou must therefore forsake that opinion, that thou mayest attaine to true understanding, that thou mayest know Christ aright, how he is the true and good shepheard, whereof we have heard sufficient. Now he compareth the good shepheard with the evill, or hireling, and saith: *A good shepheard giveth his life for the sheep: but an hireling, and he which is not the shepheard, neither the sheep are his own, seeth the wolfe comming, and leaveth the sheep, and the wolfe catcheth and scattereth the sheep. So the hireling flyeth because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.* It is true indeed that Christ is properly the only shepheard, even as the name of Christ doth belong to him alone, yet he communicateth the same unto us, that we also may be called Christians. So although he be the only shepheard, yet he imparteth the same name to them that be of the ministrie. After the same manner, *Mat. 23.* he forbiddeth, that we call no man father upon the earth, forasmuch as there is one only our father, which is in heaven, notwithstanding *Paul* calleth himself the father of the *Corinthians*, *1 Cor. 4.* when he saith: *In Christ Iesus I have begotten you through the Gospell.* So therefore it seemeth as though God alone would have the name of a father, and in the meane season notwithstanding he granteth the same name to men, that they also may be fathers, howbeit that they have not of themselves but by Christ. Even as we are called Christians, because we have nothing of our selves, but for that all things are given unto us through Christ. Moreover, *he hireling, saith Christ, which is not the shepheard, neither the sheep are his own, when he seeth the wolfe comming, leaveth the sheep and flyeth, &c.* This surely is a hard saying, that they which truly preach the Gospell, and strengthen

& heal the sheep, nevertheless at the last doe suffer the sheep to be caught and torne in peices, and doe then flie away, when the sheep have need of greatest helpe. As long as the wolves doe not appeare, they doe their duty carefully and diligently, but as soon as they see the wolfe breake in, they forthwith leave the sheep. If they then have fed them well, that they be fat, strong and whole, they are the better liked of the wolves, for whom they have fed them. But what is the hidden meaning of this parrable? The meaning of Christ is this: In my kingdom (which consisteth in nothing else, but that the weak be strengthened, the sick healed, the faint hearted encouraged) the wholly crosse shall not be wanting. For when it is preached, that Christ only, whose silly shee p we are, hath care of us, strengthneth, healeth, & helpeth us, & that our own strength & our own works are of no importance at al, (whereby al works of the world and the divers sorts of worshiping God which it inventeth are utterly disallowed) the world cannot abide such manner of preaching, so that it is a naturall propertie of the Gospell, to bring the crosse with it as unseparably accompanying it, & he that wil unfainedly professe it before the world, must needs yeeld himselfe to bear persecution. Forasmuch as the case standeth thus, it is not hard to perceive how great difference there is between the true shepheards and the hirelings. He that is an hireling preacheth the Gospell as long as he is reported among men to be a learned, godly & holy man. But when as he is reprov'd or set upon as an Heretick and wicked fellow, or moved to make a recantation, then he either recanteth, or taketh himselfe to his feet, leaving the miserable sheep alone without a shepheard, then their case becommeth worse then it was before. What doth it then avails the sheep if they were well fed before? If they were true shepheards, they would spend their life before they would so leave the sheep to the jawes of the wolves, and would be ready alwayes to offer their neck to the Axe for the Gospels sake. They therefore are never good shepheards, which so preach the Gospell, that they may thereby get unto themselves honour, riches, and profit, without all doubt they are hirelings, who seek after their own things even in sound doctrine, yea and in the word of God. Wherefore they abide no longer, then while they may have honour, praise and commoditie thereby, but as soone as the wolfe commeth, goe back, deny the word, and get themselves away, leaving the sheep, which very earnestly seek for pasture and their shepheard, who may keep them from the injurie of the wolves, but that good shepheard can no where be found, who flyeth away even at that time, when the sheep have most need of a defender and strengthner. The same shall happen to us in time to come, when wee shall once begin to be touched indeed. Then the Preachers will shut their mouthes, and provide for their safety by flying, and the sheep shall be miserably dispersed, so that one shall be carried this way, another that way,

way: God grant that some of them may stand valiantly in defence of the Gospel, and spend their blood, if the case so require in delivering their sheep. Thus Christ hath painted forth the hirelings in their colours, who thus saith moreover: *I am that good shepheard, and know mine, and am knowne of mine.* These words doe containe much, I should spend over much time, if I should handle them severally. He speaketh here of the peculiar duty that belongeth to himselfe. I know my sheep, saith he, and they againe know me. Now the summe is this: Christ knoweth us to be his sheep, and we againe know him to be our shepheard. He knoweth us to be such sheep as are weake and diseased, which he doth not cast off, but hath a care of them, and healeth them, although they be so diseased, that all the world thinketh that they are not his sheep, and this indeed is the knowledge of the world. But Christ doth not so know them, neither doth he greatly regard what manner of ones they be, but considereth whether they be sheep. They therefore are the true shepheards, who following Christ, doe so know their sheep, that they looke unto the persons, not to the disease. My father knoweth me, saith Christ, but the world knoweth me not. When as therefore the houre shall come, that I shall dye an ignominious death upon the crosse, all with one voice will cry out: was this the sonne of God? he must needs be a condemned man, and given up unto Satan, both in soule and also in body. So the world will consider and know me. But my father will say in this sort: this is my well beloved sonne, my King and Saviour. He beholderh not my affliction, my wounds, my crosse and death, but he considereth my person, that is, my very selfe. Wherefore if I were in the midst of hell, or in the jaws of Satan, yet I should come out againe, for the father will not forsake me. Likewise I know my sheep, and they know me. They are certaine that I am a good shepheard, they know me, therefore they come to me for succour, and cleave unto me, neither doth it any thing feare them, that they are subject to manifold infirmities and diseases, they know very well that I would have such manner of sheep to resort unto me. *Other sheep I have also, which are not of this fold: them also must I bring and they shall heare my voice, and there shall be one sheepfold, and one shepheard.* Some have so handled this place, that they asseme it shall be fulfilled before the latter day, when Antichrist, Iohn, and Helias shall come. Which is flutely against the truth, and forged of Satan, that men might beleve that the whole world shall at the last become Christian. Which Satan therefore did that he might darken the sound doctrine, that we might never rightly understand it. Beware therefore of this delusion. For by and by after the ascension of Christ this was done and fulfilled, and is yet at this day fulfilled. As soone as the Gospel was published, it was preached to the Iewes, and this people was the sheepfold. Now he saith, that he hath certaine other sheep also, which are not of this fold, which



also he must gather together, whereby he sheweth, that the Gospell must be preached to the Gentiles that they also may beleefe in Christ, that of the Jewes and Gentiles may be made one Church. Which he performed afterward by the Apostles, who preached the Gospel to the Gentiles, and brought them to the faith. So there is now one body, one Church, one faith, one hope, one love, one baptisme, and so of the like, which continueth at this day, and shall so continue even to the end of the world. Wherefore doe not so understand it as though all men shal believe in Christ, for the crosse must alwayes, be borne of us, forasmuch as the greatest part is alwayes of that faction, which persecureth Christians. The Gospell also must be continually preached, that alwayes some may be brought to Christianity. And thus much for a compendious exposition of this text. **The eight Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, of the lost sheep.** (*Verse 1. to the 7.*) *Then resorted unto him, &c.*

**I**N this text, dearly beloved, even that doctrine is contained, which we are perswaded, and glory to be our chief doctrine, and which by best right deserveth to be called christian doctrine, to wit, of grace and forgiveness of sinnes, set downe against the doctrine of the Law, and of workes. But it is a very shamefull thing, that a Sermon so excellent, and replenished with so great comfort and joy, should be heard of a man that is wicked and a contemner of the word of God. This is much more miserable, that all think they have so soone thoroughly learned it, to the knowledge whereof every one will seeme to have attained, thinking that there is nothing in it, which he doth not perfectly understand, and that there is no neede to spend any more study in learning it. Although it be not grievous to God himselfe, neither doth it yke or weary him, every yeare repeating it, or rather every day exercising it, as though he knew to preach nothing else, being unskilfull and ignorant of all other kind of doctrine. And we miserable and wretched men doe so soone as we think attaine to the knowledge of the cheifest doctrine, that forthwith it is wearisome and tedious unto us to repeat it, whereby all pleasure and love of the word of God dyeth and is extinguished in us. But before I declare the article or cheif poynt here taught, I think it good, that the beginning of this chapter be diligently considered, which S. Luke setteth in stead of a preface, and sheweth what gave Christ cause to make this sermon, where he saith: *Then resorted unto him all the Publicans & sinners to hear him.* In which words he plainly signifieth what men Christ kept company, namely with them, which in the sight of al men lived as it did not become them, and were openly called sinners and evil persons. Whereby it appeareth that the Pharises seemed to have sufficient cause to find fault with Christ, for that he, which would be counted holy, did familiarly keepe company with such men. For they were commonly called Publicans, at that time, to whom the Ro-  
mans


mans did let out some Citie or custom, or some charge or oversight in matters for a certaine summe of money: as the Turke or Venetians doe now commit to some one some Citie or office, for which a certaine summe of money is yearly to be paid, and whatsoever they shall scrape together by unjust exactions about this summe, that is their own. So also the aforesaid Publicans did, which so gathered those tributes and money wherewith they were charged, that they themselves also might have some gaine thereby. And seeing that a summe of money to be paid for some Citie or office was not small, they desirous to gaine thereby, did by all means deale unjustly, and used extortion in all things, in all places, and with all persons. For the Lords and masters held them so hardly and straightly, that they could not get much thereby, if they would deale rightly and justly, and oppresse no man with unjust exactions. Whereupon they had a very evill report abroad, that they were most unjust exactors, and endued with small honestie and integritie of life. Likewise the rest in generall were called sinners, which otherwise lived dishonestly and wretchedly, and were defiled with filthy offences, as with covereousnesse, with whoredom, with surfetting and drunkennesse, and such like. Such resort here unto Christ, and come to heare him, when as before they had knowne him by report to be excellent and famous both in words and deedes. Howbeit it is certaine that in them although they seemed even desparate, there was a sparke of vertue and honestie, in asmuch as they longed after Christ, both coveting to heare his doctrine, and also earnestly desiring to see the workes which he did, when before they knew him to be a good man, and heard no ill report either of his doctrine or workes, so that their life did farre differ from his. Nevertheles they are so well disposed, that they are not his enemies, neither refuse or flie his company, but runne unto him, not of any evill purpose or intent, but to see and heare some good thing, whereby they may amend their life. Contrariwise the Pharises and scribes, which were counted most righteous and holy, are such poysonfull beastes, that they are not only sore displeased at Christ whom they can abide neither to see nor heare, but also they cannot be content, that miserable sinners should come unto him, and heare him, wherby they being led by repentance might amend: Yea they doe also beside this murmur, and reprove Christ, for that he admitted unto him, and received Publicans and sinners, saying: Behold, is this that holy and famous man? Who will now say that he is of God, when as he hath society with so wicked wretches? yea rather he is a drinker of wine and a glutton, as they say else where, a friend to Publicans and sinners. Such a report he is constrained to beare of the Holy Pharisees, not for that he giving himselfe to gluttonie and surfetting, accustomed to feed excessively and follow riotous pleasure together with them, but onely because he admitted such in-

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to his company, and did not contemptuously reject them. For in their opinion he should have gone with a sad and austere countenance, in base apparrell, and have remained severed from the conversation and company of men, and refused their fellowship, least that by familiar custome with them, he should be defiled, and should have done as they were accustomed to doe after the manner of holy men. Of whom *Esay* writeth, that they studied for such puritie, that they did feare and suffer against their will even the touching of a sinner. Which indeed plainly appeareth, *Luke 7.* in the Pharisee murmuring against Christ, because he suffered himselfe to be touched of the sinnefull woman. And it was they, that would alway be his masters, and prescribe unto him rules whereby to live, and behave himselfe in this life. Therefore in this place they murmure, for that he did not apply himselfe unto them, neither did disdain the company and conversation of such sinners according to their example. Now Christ also is somewhat stout, plainly shewing here, that he can suffer the mastership of none, but that he is altogether free and exempt from the commandements of all, as commonly in the Gospels we see him to be at his owne will and pleasure, who nevertheless otherwise was both gentler & also more serviceable.  Then al the rest. But when as they would deal with him by lawes, and be his masters, then all friendship ceased, for he did not otherwise leap back, then the Adamant laid upon the anuile and stricken, speaking and doing only the contrary of that which they require of him, although they seeme to speake even rightly and well, alleadging thereunto also the word of God. As they doe heare, where they come and say: thou must doe thus, thou must follow the conversation of honest men, thou must flee the company of wicked men. This truly is a substantiall doctrine, and confirmed by testimony of the Scripture. For *Moses* himselfe commandeth the Iewes, to avoid evill men, and take away evill from among them. By this text they confirme their sayings, and come with their *Moses*, and would make Christ subiect to their lawes, and have him ruled by them. But Christ nevertheless will be at his own liberty. And he is not unlike the Vnicorne, which beast men deny that he can be taken alive, with what kind of hunting soever he be assailed.  He suffereth himselfe to be wounded, to be stricken with darts, and to be slaine, to be taken he doth not suffer himselfe. No otherwise doth Christ also, who although he be set upon by lawes, yet doth he not suffer them, but breaketh through as through a spiders web, rebuking them most sharply. As *Marth. 12.* whereby they found fault with his Disciples, because they had plucked the eares of Corne on the Sabbath day, alleadging the commandement of God that the Sabbath was to be kept holy, &c. he avoucheth the cleane contrary, tearing in sunder the commandement, affirming the contrary both in words, and also by examples. Also *Marth. 16.* where he declaroth to his Apostles that he shall suffer

suffer and be crucified, but *Peter* admonisheth him to be of a good cheer, and setteth before him the precept of charitie, saying: *Master pittie thy selfe*, there againe he doth earnestly and sharply blame and rebuke his admonisher, and saith: *Get thee behind me Satan: thou understandest not the things that are of God, but the things that are of men*. And in a sum, he is most impatient of all lawes wherewith they deale with him, he will be most free from all commandements, and acknowledged to be the Lord of them. He alway giveth such answers, as with which he representeth the exactors, neither will he keep any law as though he were compelled to doe it. Contrariwise, when he doth any thing of his own accord, then no law is so little or so light, whereunto he doth not willingly obey, and doth much more then it requireth. Wherefore there can none be found more gentle and serviceable then he, if he be urged with the controlement or exaction of none. Moreover he doth so farre humble himselfe, that he washeth the feet of *Judas* which betrayed him, according as he himselfe speaketh of himselfe: *I came not to be served, but to serve others*, &c. which is manifest to them that consider his life, how he walked abroad in *Judea*, *Samaria*, *Galile*, and in the night slept on the ground, fasted fortie dayes, and took no rest at all, but patiently sustained so much labour, that they feared least he should be ravished in mind, or finally bring some hurt to his bodie. He doth all things that he can, but that hee refuseth to be compelled, and suffereth no lawes to be prescribed unto him, which if any set before him, he most stoutly resisteth and striveth against them. So he is both of a most stout and of a most mild spirit, neither is there any more stout, nor more serviceable then he, who can abide to doe none of those things that are exacted of him, and nevertheless doth all things even most abundantly, and as it were overfloweth with a flood of good workes, and watereth all things, no man commanding him, or by way of controlement exacting & requiring any thing of him, but he being permitted to doe voluntarilie and of his own accord. These things are done for our example, that we may learne what a true Christian man is after the spirit, least we judge him according to the law, and according to our owne wisdom and understanding. For Christ is therefore our Lord, that he may make such men of us, as he is himselfe. And as he cannot suffer himselfe to be tyed and bound with lawes, but will be Lord of lawes, yea and of all things, so also ought not the conscience of a Christian to suffer them. For we are so much made free by Christ, that our conscience may know nothing concerning any law, whose judgement and controlement it may abide to suffer. Neither ought we any otherwise to be affected according to the state of the inward conscience, then if no law had been given or made: yea as if neither ten commandements, nor one, either of God, or of Bishop, or of *Cesar* were given to us, that we may plainly say: I know nothing of any law; neither

ther will I know any thing. For in that state and condition, wherein we Christians are, our workes, and the workes of all men doe cease, yea and all lawes also. For where there is no worke, neither can there be any law, requiring a worke and saying: this thing was to be done of thee, this to be left undone. But we through Christ are wholly free from all workes, and righteous by meer grace and mercie, whereby we live only before God. And this is our treasure, whereby we are Christians, and live and stand before God. For how we ought to live in outward conversation, to wit in flesh and blood before the world, it doth nothing pertain unto this place. Wherefore a Christian must learne so to rule his conscience that he suffer it not to be held captive or intangled with any law. But whosoever will bind and hold it with any law, let him stoutly and boldly strive there against, and doe as he seeth Christ doe here and elsewhere, where he useth so great stoutnesse and earnestnesse of mind, that no Moses or exacter of the law can prevaile any thing with him, although otherwise he be most humble, most sweet and gentle of all men. Howbeit this art is above measure high and excellent, which none but he understandeth, wherof he is the master, who knoweth how to appease all lawes and teachers of lawes. We are not able to doe so: For the Devil mightily assaileth us, and as often as he setteth upon the conscience of man, he driveth him to that point, that he entrencheth disputation with him, what he hath done or not done. Then such a disputation beginneth, as wherein is debated of our sinne and  righteousness, even then man is brought into a dangerous case and into the myre, where he sticketh, neither can he escape or rid himselfe out, but is forthwith deeper and deeper plunged in. For he is laden with a heauey burden, which he is not able to beare, wherefore he walketh musing, gnawing and consuming his minde, neither can he get any quietnesse thereof. Which I doe plainly feele in my selfe, neither can I wrastle out, and deliver my selfe by any travell, although I labour alwayes, assaying all meanes to escape out of this gulf, that I may answer the law, and obtaine so much, that it may keepe silence, and say, now at length thou hast done so much, wherewith I am constrained to be content. But all endeavour and study is in vaine: for such a deepe pit and dangerous gulf it is, out of which no man is able to escape, although he joyne the helps of all men to himselfe, as they can beare me witnesse which have made tryal hereof, and doe as yet daily try it. The cause is our nature, which will have to do with workes and lawes, and heare what they say; and follow them that say: Why doth he eate with Publicans and sinners? if he did eate and drink with us, he should doe well. Also: why doe thy Disciples pluck the eares of corne on the Sabbath day? &c. with whom it will have to do so long, till the law saith: now thou art righteous. For it can attaine to no higher understanding, then that the doctrine of the law is the chiefe

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doctrine, and that the righteousness thereof is the best life before God. In it it continually remaineth so captive yea and bound, neither can it by any means deliver itselfe out of this prison, being not able to pacifie and appease the law, that it doe not exact any thing of it, or reprehend it in any thing, but it is compell'd to be captive therein as in a perpetuall prison, and the longer it striveth and fighteth with the law, into so much worse case doth it alwayes come, untill at the last it be wholly subdued. What therefore must I doe, the law assailing and urging my conscience, especially when I perceive my selfe not to doe that which it requireth? I answer, even that which Christ doth here, who admitteth or acknowledgeth no law, although brought out of the law of God. So learne thou also to doe, that thou mayest boldly say to the law, leave of law to dispute with me, I have nothing to doe with thee. And for that very same cause, for which thou comest to dispute with me, and to enquire of me, how good and righteous I am, I will not heare thee. For it here maketh no matter, what I am, or what I ought to doe, and what not to doe, but what Christ himselfe is, ought to doe, and doth. For now we are in the bride chamber, where only the bridegroom and the bride must have to doe, and it becometh not thee to come thither, nor to intermeddle any thing there. But nevertheless it now and then knocketh and saith: in the meane season notwithstanding good workes must be done of thee, the commandements of God must be kept, if thou wilt obtaine salvation. Answer againe: but thou hearest that it is not now time to speake of them: for now I have obtained my righteousness and the summe of all my salvation without my workes in Christ my Lord, and am already saved before thou camest, therefore I have no need of thy presence. For as I have said, where workes prevaile nothing, neither is the law there of any importance or weight, and where there is no law, neither is there any sin. The Bride therefore alone, all the rest being excluded, must reigne in the Bridechamber with Christ, in whom she hath all things at once, neither needeth shee any thing more, which is necessary to salvation. Wherefore the law must be excluded and utterly rejected, yea and cast of, as often as it will invade and set upon the conscience. For surely it ought not to meddle therewith, neither cometh it in time, when it will have much to doe there, where it ought to have nothing to doe, and whether it ought in no wise to come. For the conscience resteth in this article of our Christian faith, I beleve in Iesus Christ my Lord, which suffered, dyed, and was buried for me, &c. unto whom both *Moses* law, and *Caesars*, and divine lawes ought to give place. All that therefore is boldly to be chased from me, whatsoever will dispute with me of sinnes, righteousness, and such like things. Behold, Christ would in this place resemble this libertie unto us, that as Christians we suffer no Master in our conscience, trusting most constantly to this one thing,

thing, that we are baptised, and called unto Christ, and by him justified and sanctified, whereupon we may say: He is my righteousness, my treasure, my worke, and in summe, what not against sinne and unrighteousnes (whereof the law endeavoureth to accuse me,) If it please you to have other righteousness, workes, law, &c. then may yet take them from whence you wil, surely yet shall find no place for them in me. Thus may a man defend himselfe, and stand against the suggestions and tentations of the Divell, and of sinnes either past or present. Wherefore *Moses* and *Christ* are farre to be separated asunder, as also workes and faith, the conscience and the outward life, so that if the law will set upon me, and make my heart afraid, then is it time to send it away, and if it will not give place, to thrust it out by force, and to say: I will willingly do good workes, and will goe forward as much as I am able for that time that I live among men, but here I will know nothing at all of them in my conscience, and therefore let me alone, and prate nothing of them. For here I will vouchsafe to heare neither *Moses* nor the *Pharises*, but *Christ* alone doth obtaine place to reigne here. I will like unto *Mary*, sit at his feet to heare his word, but let *Martha* tarry abroad, and busie herselfe in the kitchen and about the Houshold affaires. And in summe, I will not trouble the quietnesse of my conscience. ¶

But what shall I say, whereas in the meane season I doe dayly sinne, which surely is evill? I answer, indeed it is true, I am a sinner, and I doe unjustly, but I must not therefore despaire, as though I were subject to condemnation, yea or tremble because of the rigour of the law. For by faith I apprehended him, which hath apprehended me, and apply my selfe unto him, which hath imbraced me in baptism, and hath put me in his bosom, and by the preaching of the Gospel hath called me to the communion of all his good things, bidding me to beleeve in him. Now when as I have apprehended him by faith, then may I be bold to bid the *Pharises*, and *Moses* with his rables, all the *Lawyers* with their bookes, all men with their workes hold their peace and give place. No law hath then any power to convince or accuse me: for in this *Christ* I have all things abundantly, whatsoever can be required in me. This, I say, is the doctrine and art of *Christians*, the scope and end whereof is this, even to reigne with *Christ*. ¶ But blockish men do not understand it, taking hereupon occasion to live more freely, as they list, saying what need is there that I should doe good workes, forasmuch as *Christ* hath abrogated the law, &c. Their foolish babbling is in no wise to be born, for *Christ* is on the other part also to be considered of thee, and thou must marke what he doth more. For here he himselfe saith: that he is that man which seeketh the miserable and lost sheep, which also he witnesseth by his present deed, by receiving sinners and *Publicans*, and by preaching unto them. Whereby thou seest that he doth fulfill much more than the

the law commandeth to be done, and teacheth thee to doe the same by his example. He is of such an heroicall stomach, that he will not be under the law, yet doth he of his own accord more things then the law requireth. Doe thou so also, neither look when thou shalt be forced and driven on by the law, but without the law and of thine own accord doe that which is needfull to be done, as Peter 1. Pet. 2. admonisheth saying: *as free, and not as having the libertie for a cloke of maliciousnesse, but as the servants of God.* And Paul Rom. 6, *Being made free from sinne, ye are made the servants of righteousness.* These are they, which doe all things with a free conscience without the law, and unconstrained. For when the Gospel is truly in the heart, it maketh a man to be such a one, as doth not look while the law commeth, but is so full of joy in Christ, that he is with speed carried unto Good works, doing well to all men, as much as he is able, and that of his owne accord, before the law commeth into his mind. Moreover he bestoweth both body and life, having no regard, what he must therefore suffer, and so he is full of good workes which voluntarily flowing as it were out of a continuall fountaine are derived unto many: As Christ being compelled, doth not abide to take up so much as a straw, but uncompelled giveth himselfe to be crucified for me, and for the whole world, dying for the lost sheep. Howbeit it is very necessary to discern these things well, when it is come to hand-strokes, and within the throwing of the dart, as it is said, the law and sinnes disputing now with thy conscience, then see that thou doe boldly repress *Moses*, and bid him keep silence, sending him abroad to the old man. Drive him into *Moses* schoole, that he may dispute with him and say: *Dost thou heare? thou art too slow and sluggish in giving and serving thy neighbour.* When Christ is to be served of thee, thou wilt more willingly serve thy bellie: thou wilt come in no perill for Christs sake, thou dost deceitfully rob thy neighbour circumventing him by what meanes soever thou canst. For that sluggish asle flying labour, and following only idlenesse and wantonnesse, use the tables of stone, whom even against his will, constrain, to go on in his duty. Wherefore when thou shalt set upon me, in that thing which is right and meet (thou must say unto *Moses*) I will willingly heare thee, and follow thy admonitions, namely according to the outward man, and in outward life, where thou mayest beare rule like a schoole master, and as one governing a familie: Where thou hast power to command me, to be obedient, modest, patient, good to my neighbour, dutifull and liberall to the poore, and to celebrate God with praises poured forth to his glory: moreover to be content for his word sake to abide the contumelies and slanders of all persons, and to suffer every kind of Injurie of the world. With all which I am not greatly moved, yea I would doe more things then I am able to doe according to the outward man. For the spirit, by the testi-

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mony of Christ, is willing, and ready, although the flesh be weak. *So* But if thou wilt goe so farre, whether it is unlawfull for thee to come, that is, into my heart and conscience, there will I nether see thee, nor vouchsafe to heare thee. For there I have an other both great and unspeakable treasure, whose name is Christ, & in sum, whatsoever pertaineth to bridle the outward man, thou canst not lay on a sufficient burden thereof; but thou must burden the conscience nothing at all. For he that enjoyeth Christ is above all lawes, as *Paul* saith, *the law is not given for the just*, *¶* who notwithstanding in the meane time doth more things, then he is able to fulfill in the flesh. For according to the law we are sinners, and concerning our person we must abide under it. But through Christ we are farre above the law. So *Moses* without Christ must exercise his grosse workes, whereby he may compell men which are not yet Christians, to be honest civilly before the world: for he doth not make Christians righteous and honest. Howbeit I will not deny that he doth this, that he sheweth unto them their duties, which otherwise they would willingly fulfill and satisfie, yea and doe moe things also, but that the flesh doth not so willingly and with that readines wherewith it ought, follow the spirit. In which respect they are to be admonished and urged, the conscience neverthelesse remaining free, so that the law have no power to accuse them. Wherefore such doctrine and admonition ought to be among Christians (as it is certaine that among the Apostles there was) whereby every man may be admonished of his state and office. As for the rest which are not Christians, they must be ruled by *Moses* lawes, and burdened with them both outwardly *¶* and inwardly, whereby they may be forced and afflicted, that they may doe that which is right, forsaking that which is evill, although they doe it not with a patient and willing minde. Of which kinde the rash multitude of the unruly common sort and the obstinate people is, who doe not regard nor understand the liberty of Christ, although they can babble and glory of many things concerning the Gospel, and they notwithstanding doe abuse it only to the lust of their mind: let them know that they are under the discipline and correction of *Moses*. For they are not such men as are capable of this doctrine, which live with such a secure mind, that they think, they have no need of the Gospel, or that they otherwise doe sufficiently know it. But they only are capable hereof, which are busied with the disputation of the conscience and the law, of sinnes and of the wrath of God, by consideration whereof they become astonied, feeling the words of the heart speaking thus: Alas, how wretchedly have I led my life? what account shall I make unto God: and so they be to *¶* much fearfull and amazed, the rest being more then is meet, secure and presumptuous, feeling no law nor sinne, no nor any trouble at all. And the safe standeth very unequally with both, for they which should have nothing

thing to doe with the law, doe most of all wrastle with it, and alone feeble it. But others of whom only the law should be felt, are not being moved with it: yea the more grievously they are terrified by the law and the wrath of God, by so much they become more indurate. There must therefore be another master to amend these, namely, the slayer and tormentor, who may teach them, being unwilling to do well in the name of the Lord and with favour, in the name of another to doe that that becometh them, with no favour, the reward also of hel fire & of all miseries being set before them. Howbeit Christ both here and every where else (as it is said) both by doctrine & also by his own example teacheth us, which feeble our sinnes and the burden of the law, and would willingly be Christians, to accustom our selves to fight against it, and drive it from us unto others, to give no place to the devill, who would by the law breake up the bridechamber of Christ, and thrust himselfe into his place, that is, take away from the conscience her joy and comfort whereby he may draw man into desparation, that he may not be able cheerfully to lift up his heart & head before God. For this is the art of Christ, whom it becometh to know and learne more things, then that prophane and blockish common sort knoweth and understandeth, that we may know well the manner how to fight with the devill, and to beare his assault, as often as he shall set upon us, and dispute with us out of *Moses*. With whom when he goeth about such things, we must not despise in many words, but must forthwith appeale from *Moses* to Christ, and cleave to him. For all his travels and deceipts tend unto this end, that he may craftely pluck us from Christ, and draw us unto *Moses*. For he knoweth full well, the matter being brought to that poynt, the victory shall be on his side. Wherefore thou must againe and againe take heed that thou suffer not thy selfe to be plucked out of this haven, neither to be inticed out of this circle. And although he shall lay many things against thee out of the law, even in as much as it is the word of God, whereunto it is meet that thou doe obey, yet mayest thou answer him and say: dost thou not heare, that I will now know or heare nothing concerning the law? for we are now in that circle and haven, wherein it is not inquired what I must doe, or leave undone, but by what meanes we obtaine to have God gentle and favourable unto us, and how we get remission of sinnes. Here I will abide in the armes of Christ, cleaving & unseparably about his neck, and creeping into his bosome, whatsoever the law shall say, and my heart shall feeble: nevertheless, so that we keep the principal part of our faith sincere, and the chiefe poynt safe, outwardly I will willingly doe and suffer what burden soever it shall lay upon me. Behold, he that understood this art well, should be a right and perfect man, as Christ was, so farre above all lawes, that he might be bold to call Peter Saran, and the Pharises fooles, and leaders of the blind, and put *Moses* himselfe to silence, and so live altogether without



the law, and yet in the meane season fulfill all lawes : furthermore be obstinate and stout against all that will enforce and constrain him, and yet notwithstanding of his own accord profit and obey all. But truly herein consisteth all the defect, that we doe never fully and perfectly learne this Art, the Divell so letting and hindring us, that we goe preposterously to work, being too ready and willing to hear all things whatsoever the law saith. At whose threatnings also we are not a little astonished, which it had been better for us not to have heard. Again in outward things also we give our selves to liberty more then is convenient, whereas the body should be kept under and bridled with workes, whereby it might be compelled to beare whatsoever should be grievous unto it, when as yet it often times sinneth, yet so, that sinne abide without, where it must abide, and have his *Moses*, who *ſ* alwayes may be neere unto it with his exactions. Howbeit inwardly let no sinne or law beare rule, or reigne, but let Christ alone rule, and reign by meere grace, joy, and comfort. So all things should be done rightly, and man should be apt and fit to all good things, both to doe, and also to suffer, with a glad and obedient heart by faith not fained in the grace of God through Christ. *ſ* Wherefore let the conscience beare rule over all lawes, let the flesh be subject to every law, Now he that is skilfull of this art, let him give thanks to God, and take heed that he be not too wise in it, and that he conceive not a false perswasion of knowledge. For I and my like do not yet understand it, as we ought to understand it, although we be most expert of all, and have been longest exercised therein. For (as I have said) it is such an art, as no man knoweth, but they which are Christians, to the learning whereof notwithstanding *ſ* they are compelled to be schollers all their life long. Wherefore molt far of from the knowing hereof are those secure spirits, who alone know all things, but who in very deed beside that false perswasion of knowledge, know nothing at all, and by this very perswasion they are farthest of all drawn from this art and from the whole Gospell. Neither is there any thing more grievous, no nor a greater hurt can be brought unto Christianity, then by those pettie doctors and masters, which seeme unto themselves to have some wisdoms. For they fill all corners of the world with sects and factions, being such men, as serve neither God nor men; heare neither the law nor the Gospell, but condemne the law with a secure mind, and loath the Gospell with hearing it, alwayes seeking after new doctrine: But truly we teach nothing for their sakes, in asmuch as they are not worthy of our doctrine, and are to punished of God, that they can never learne it, and bring forth any fruit thereby, although they heare it. Therefore let us only keepe it, whereof they doe take away nothing at all from us, but that they heare a vaine noise and sound of it. And thus much for the first part of this sermon, in which Christ teacheth by his own example, how every man ought to keep

keepe his conscience free from all disputation of the law, and terror of the wrath of God and finnes. Now consequently I thinke it good diligently to consider this excellent and goodly parrable of Christ, where he beginneth and saith: Luke 15. 3 *What man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave ninetie and nine in the wilderness, and goe after that which is lost untill he find it?* Christ is not only of a stout mind, who will not follow the words and masterhip of them, but he bringeth probable causes of his stoutnesse, with great cunning refelling their objections, and stopping their mouths, so, that they can murmur nothing against him. Moreover he convinceth them by their own example and deed, and concludeth, that they ought for good cause to be utterly ashamed, being bold to speake unto him, and reprehend him in him in so great a matter, which they themselves doe in a much lesser. For by what meanes could he better and more readily answer them, then if he should say: Will you. *O excellent and most wise masters, commend me this thing, and teach me to drive away and alienate from me miserable sinners, which long after me, and come to heare me, when as there is nothing that you your selves doe not for one lost sheeps sake, who leaving ninetie and nine in the wilderness (that is in the field and at the fold) doe run to seeke that which is lost, neither doe yee leave off seeking, untill such time as yee have found it, and brought it home? And you count it to be well and commendably done, for which if any should find fault with you, without doubt yee would reprove him as mad and beside himselfe. And should not I as a Saviour of soules doe likewise with men, as you doe with a lost sheep?* Seeing there is no comparisson even of one soule to all the creatures living and breathing in the earth. Why therefore are you not utterly ashamed of your doings, presuming to reprehend me in this worke, which you your selves commend, and are forced to commend? Wherefore if ye reprove and find fault with me, you your selves are first to be reprov'd and found fault with. This is rightly to have answered, and with honor to have stopped the mouths of these controllers and fault finders, the causes being sufficiently shewed, why they ought not here to find fault with or controule him. They have well surely yielded unto him with shame enough, as it is meet, and have gained nothing else by their masterhip and controlement then utter shame and ignominy. For it is a shame to such masters, yea and an exceeding great abomination, that they stick not to arrogate so much unto themselves, as to teach that man, and admonish him of his duty, who of God is appointed a master over all. But it ought so to fall out, as I have said, that he which will rule & judge a Christian by his masterhip, and endeavour to bring him from his baptism and the article of Christ, to be ruled by his wisdom or law, doth not only become a foole, but is also the author of extreme abomination and shame. For he worketh shame to

the temple and sanctuary of God, and with diuellish rashnesse invadeth his kingdome, where he alone with the Holy Ghost must reigne. Wherefore he very well deserueth, that God again bring him to shame and ignominie before the whole world, seeing that he taketh to himselfe mastership in that place, where only Christ ought to be master, and not unworthily to his great evill be kicked against the prick. Wherefore it is no good to iest with Christians, for they are Saints, and let him thinke wise not be too busie with that man, whose name is Christ, for he can get no gaine thereby, for Christ is most impatient of all their mastership and doctrine. So also a Christian must by no means suffer them, for if he suffer them, giving place to such suggestions, to wit, thou oughtest to have done this or that, or as yet thou oughtest to doe it, then is his case become exceeding ill, inasmuch as he hath falne from Christ. Therefore we must endeavour, to hold Christ fast, having no regard, although all the world should teach us. For if we shall abide with him, and hold the true understanding of the article concerning him, we shall easily overcome all such masters and teachers. For this Christ will be most free from all controlement and mastership, contending to be the only master and controler of all men, that either in favour they may reverently acknowledge him for the Lord and master, and themselves for fooles, or in furie and indignation being subiect to the reproach of all men, may utterly perish. But I have said before, that the present doctrine for the verie exceeding goodnesse, sweetnesse, and consolation thereof, is not to be yet forth to the rude, blackish, and unruly common sort, to whom we doe not preach it, but to those only, which strive with terror and anguish of conscience, or stand in perill and danger of death, and dispute with the diuell concerning their sinnes committed, whereby he would drive them unto desperation. Before these this amiable image is to be set, whereby they may receive comfort and cheerefulnesse of mind. As for others which live with a secure mind, and doe little know what anguish and spirituall sorrowfulnesse is, they are to be led to Moses to the tormentor. For it is an image most pleasant and amiable, and more artificially painted, then any Apelles is able to paint with his pensill. Neither doth any man excell in such eloquence of speech, that he is able sufficiently to declare and comprehend it in words. Wherefore it is to be apprehended in the heart by faith, as much as may be. Nevertheless we must speake something of it, that we may give cause and occasion to other to thinke and consider more earnestly thereof. I also saith he, *have an hundred sheep, that is, that little flock of all Christendome, of which number one is lost*, and fallen from the communion of Christians. Now therefore dost thou desire to know the affection of my mind? then must thou bestow thy dilligence, to paint out well and cunningly both the shepherd and the lost sheep. For that shepherd, which is but a man, and guideth the flock,

stock, which is created to be slaine, hath great regard to preserve it in safety, and is not a little carefull, how he may find the sheep when it is lost, and bring it home againe, and with no lesse desire the sheep longeth after the shepheard. Whom if it understand to be his owne shepheard (as by nature it doth understand) it feareth him not, but runneth unto him with great confidence, and being full of good hope, goeth before him. Yea as soone as ever it heareth his voice, it answereth by bleating. On the other side also the shepheard hath great care and desire to find againe the lost sheep which hath strayed from him. Both he himselfe seeketh, and sendeth forth servants to seekethere, wheresoever he thinketh it is strayed neither doth he leave seeking, until having found it, he hath brought it home. For he is not ignorant how miserable a living creature a solitary sheep is, whose life consisteth only in the helpe and safe keeping of the shepheard, in asmuch as it can nothing at all helpe it selfe, but being destitute of a shepheard, is constrained to perish. Moreover, it is also fearefull and ready to goe astray, and as soone as it hath wandred out of the way, and from the shepheard, forthwith commeth into perrill of life and cannot tarrie, although being brought, it commeth to another flock and a strange shepheard calleth it, nevertheless it goeth on through thornie and sedgeie places, through waters and fennes, untill it come in danger of the wolfe, or wasted by some other mischiese utterly perisheth. And although it be brought into by wayes, and deserts, and is now thought to be lost, notwithstanding it hath this hope, as much as nature hath put into it, that if it might heare his shepheard, it should forthwith exceedingly rejoyce being delivered from all evill. Moreover neither doth the shepheard therefore seeke it, that when he hath found it, he may wrathfully fight with it, or handle it ill for that it hath gone astray, or cast it to the wolfe to be torne in peices, but all his care and thought is, that he may most gently allure it to himselfe and may deale with it most lovingly, to wit, lay it on his shoulder and carry it, untill he hath brought it unto the rest of the flocke.

This is that picture, resembled in this creature and silly beast, where by Christ sheweth unto us, what affection of mind he beareth, and what he doth toward us, and also what we ought to promise our selves concerning him. For seeing this is manifestly true in nature, the same is much more true in the kingdome of Christ, which is the kingdome of grace, love, consolation. Therefore see that thou also doe first before thy selfe the sheep pertaining to this shepheard, then shalt thou truly understand, how much greater and vehementer care he hath taken to preserve it, also with how great study and diligence, yea and from the heart he is carefull for it, that he may find it and bring it home againe. For he will have his marvelous and continuall kindnes, and the unspeakable flames of his most fervent love to be shewed, or rather poured forth up

## The 8. Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther,

in miserable, fearefull and trembling consciences, which unfainedly lament their sinnes, and desire to be delivered from them, and such are his true sheep. For with a man that hath lost this shepherd, and heareth him not, the case standeth as with the lost sheep, which being estranged from his shepherd, strayeth more and more from him. And although it be called by the voyces of others, and runneth unto them, thinking that it shall find his own shepherd, yet failing of his purpose it findeth him not, but alway runneth from corner to corner, straying up and downe, and still wandereth farther out of the way. Neither is it succoured with any comfort or help, before it heare the voyce of the true shepherd sounding againe in his eares: even as we learne the same to be true by daily experience, and every man tryeth it in his own heart. For the Gospell of Christ being taken away or not exercised, here some false master, or author of some sect, in another place some fantastick fellow thrusteth in himselfe, one perverteth the supper of the Lord, the other baptisme, one teacheth this, the other that, of a singular holines of life, both which allureth to himselfe the miserable and straying sheep, and sheweth himselfe so, as though he weare the true shepherd. But by the meanes of these the sheep is intangled only with greater errours, untill it wandereth quite and altogether out of the way. To these cometh the devill also with his cogitations, which he craftily pureth into the heart: Alas, if thou hadest done this or that, or hadest not done, &c. with all which he practiseth nothing else, but that he may make it fall into great errours, that it may not know where to abide. And this truly falleth out, Christ being removed out of sight, and the article of him being extinguished. Whatsoever moreover shall be taught, counselled, and shewed, by what meanes soever, all things neverthelesse become worse and draw neare unto destruction, unles the true shepherd come with his voyce, and call back and bring againe the straying sheep. Hereupon it appeareth that it is exceeding necessary and convenient, that we learne to know Christ well, that we doe not behold him as a cruell tyranny or as an angry judge (as the preachers heitherro have set him forth to the people, and the devill himselfe sheweth him to the hearts of men no otherwise to be thought upon and considered) who hath drawne his sword already against us: But as the sheep doth naturally look on the shepherd, not as on him, of whom it shall be terrified, chased, and slaine, but so soone as it beholdeth him, is cheered and put in hope of help, and is no more in feare or solitarines, but forthwith speedily goeth to him with all boldnes: So also when we desire to conceive a trust and hope of help, and to be strengthened and eased with comfort, then the voyce of our shepherd, that is of Christ, must be known and learned well of us, all voyces of other shepherds not regarded, which draw us only into errours, and tosse us up and downe, and that only article must be


be heard and comprehended in mind, which Christ so lovingly and comfortably painteth in our heart, as by any meanes it can be painted, that I may with all confidence and boldnesse say: The Lord Iesus Christ is my shepheard, and I (alas) the lost shep, which hath strayed in the desert, but am troubled with no small anguish of mind for my wretched life, desiring with most fervent affection, both to have God favourable unto me, and also to have peace in my conscience. But truly I understand here, that he is no lesse desirous of me, then I am of him. I labour with great carefulnesse to come unto him, and he is carefull and desirous greatly that he may bring me againe unto himselfe. If we were certainly thus perswaded of his affection toward us, and did grave in our mind that it so greatly desireth after us, and is so sweetly powred forth upon us, it can not be, that we should abhor and feare him, but we would with a cheerefull mind run unto him, and tarry only with him, abiding to heare the doctrine or voyce of no other. For the doctrine of an other coming betweene, either of *Moses* or of any other whatsoever, doth nothing else but disquiet the conscience, so that it can never finde any peace or quietnesse. Therefore Christ saith *Mat. 11. Come unto me all ye that are weary & heavy laden, and I will ease you. Take my yoke on you, and ye shall finde rest unto your soules, &c.* As though he said: run and seeke in what places soever ye will, heare and learne whatsoever can be preached unto you, yet shall ye find no quietnesse of heart, ye shall finde no peace but in me alone. We will easily permit good works to be preached, a righteous life to be taught, the ten commandments to be delivered by instruction, and all things else which serve to the amendment of life, but so far only, as they are taught to the unruly and untractable common sort, also to force and bridle the wantonnesse of our old *Adam*. But they which preach to the conscience wrapped in anguish and terrours because of sinne, ought to preach no other words then of Christ. For this is that lost and miserable shep, of whom no other master is to be borne or had, but that only shepheard Christ, who neither urgeth it with the law, nor is eger upon it, but most sweetly and gently handleth it, and layeth the miserable and sinfull shep upon his shoulders, doing that of his own accord, which was to be done of the shep, as we shall heare by and by more at large. But surely in this place the doctrine of both (as is before also said at large) or the voyce of *Moses*, and of Christ, must be well discerned. For *Moses* ought to have no entrance to the lost shep, no nor by any means is to be admitted to it, although he preach best of al other. For if confounding these, we will comfort and erect the troubled conscience by the law after this sort: be of a good cheere, for thou hast not committed homicid, neither hast thou defiled thy self with adulterie, neither hast thou perpetrated any other heinous offence, or done it with a good will, &c. This also is a comfort, but which can endure a very small time, neither can it sustaine the assaults

and violence of the enemy, neither bringeth it or containeth any thing else but confidence of it selfe, wherewith the miserable sheep is holpen nothing. For it remaineth as much wandering and lost as before, neither can it help it selfe, or come to his own shepheard. But if we will help and succour it, we must shew unto it the true shepheard, who cometh to seeke it, that having found it he may bring it home againe, and exhibit his voyce unto it to be heard. Hereby it may obtaine *trac and effectfull consolation*, and be bold to answer Moses, and say: *Now truly I have not any care either of thy comfort or terror, and if it please thee, amplify my finnes as much as possibly thou canst, make me a man slayer and parricid, or the worst man of all men.* For now I will neither heare thee with an astonied minde, nor follow thee. But this is the summe of my comfort and salvation, whereunto also I doe confidently trust, that I have such a shepheard as seeketh me of his own accord, and having laid me on his shoulders carrieth me. Let us enter disputation hereof if thou art so disposed, not how righteous or unrighteous I am, but how I have come unto Christ. ¶ Wherefore wee must alwayes preach according to the capacittie and quallity of the hearers. For I have said that *this doctrine is not fit for a blockish and untractable man.* As it is not meet that a laborious threshier should be fed with delicates, where with the sick are to be strengthened and refreshed, but the hyreling is to be fed with browne bread and cheese, and with water. The other daintie meates and easie of digestion thou must reserve for the sick or children, which are able to digest no grosse meate: So in this thing also thou must observe the same difference, that thou doe rightly distribute these things, and give unto every one his portion as a prudent householder. For thou must keepe the doctrine of Moses and of the Law, untill thou light upon unruly, hardened, & untractable men, which lead their life securely and without feare, set before these only strong and common meates of threshiers to be eaten, that is, offer angry Moses unto them to be heard, ¶ *Who lighteneth and thundreth from the mount Sina*, who terrifieth the people of Israel, bringeth them into the desert, and drowneth King Pharaoh in the read sea. But when thou shalt light upon troubled hearts, and weake and afflicted consciences, which are now become lost sheep, then speake not a word concerning Moses and all the workes of God done in the law, but let thy talke be only of the workes done by Christ in the time of grace, and well and diligently repeate to the miserable conscience, how he sheweth himselfe toward the lost sheep, to wit, that he is the gentle and good shepheard, which is exceeding carefull for the lost sheep, so that leaving all the rest he travelth to find that one, and to bring it againe into the way, neither doth he leave of till he hath brought it home, For it is a very great griefe unto him, that any man should be in sinne, and therefore be troubled and feare, neither would he that any should remaine



maine therein, and so perish. Wherefore he doth most lovingly allure and provoke thee by his sweet Gospell to come unto him, and suffer thy selfe to be laid upon his shoulders and carried, and to be called his well-beloved sheep. ¶ As for them that live securely and pleasantly, and have no regard whether God be angry or pleased, they are not to be called lost sheep, but rather wild goates, which suffer not themselves either to be fed or ruled. But he, to whom his sinnes are a burden, and who fighteth in the fight of faith, where he is not in danger to lose Moses, but Christ himselfe, and the principall article, that is, where the conscience is in anguish, and feare, whether it hath God gentle and favourable, this is that very man, who with groaning and sighes seeketh out and cryeth for his shepheard, and desireth to be holpen, as David doth Psal. 119. *I have gone a stray like a sheep that is lost: oh seeke thy servant, &c.* In the mouth of these this sugar and these pleasant delicacies have a good tast, with which the heart is refreshed, that it fall not into desparation, but being again recreated with such a consolation, is lifted up, not by Moses but by Christ. Not that it hath Moses a friend or is able to pacifie him, but because it hath God favourable through Christ, wheresoever Moses remaineth with his comfort. Although it be very well, as also it is meet, that we do not contrary to the law practice theevrie, that we steale not, that we commit not homicid, or otherwise doe injurie and hurt to our neighbour. Howbeit that is not the right comfort of the heart, but only a momentane tickling of the utmost skinn, not during and peircing. For the devill coming and setting upon the heart, all comfort is utterly taken away. And although in some poynt thou hast done well and rightly, he neverthelesse againe bringeth ten fold more, wherein thou hast done amiss, yea even in the most pure workes he can finde much impurity, and turne all into sinne. Wherefore we must in no wise trust unto such comfort, but must rather refuse it and say: whether I be good or evill at this present I doe not dispute, but will reserve it rather unto that place, where it shall be taught and intreated concerning workes. But in this circle wherein I now stand, there is no place to entreat of workes and integritie of life, but of Christ and his workes, which he doth toward me a lost sheep. Wherefore if thou demand whether I be good or honest, I answer plainly, no, but if thou demand whether Christ be good and righteous, that undoubtedly I am able to confirm, and him I set for my goodnesse and righteousness, unto whom also alone I courageously appeale. For in his name I am baptised, of which thing I have a scale and testimony, to wit, that I am his sheep, and that he is that good shepheard, seeking his lost sheep, and dealing with me without all law, exacting nothing of me, neither as Moses urgeth, troubleth, and forceth me, but sheweth unto me his meere and most sweet grace, while he submitteeth himselfe to me, and layeth me on his shoulders, and carrieth



carrieth me. Why therefore should I feare the thundrings of Moses and of the Divell, when as I rest in his safe custody, which hath given unto me his righteousnesse and all other things, which holdeth and carrieth me, so that there is now no more danger lest I perish, I remaining a sheep and denying not my shepheard, but reposing my selfe wholly in him? Thus hast thou  Christ most lovingly set forth unto thee. Now only faith is required, whereof there is great need. For this doctrine is excellent, and replenished with most sweet consolation and comfort, but this is wanting, that the use thereof is not felt, where it ought to be felt. For when the sheepe goe astray, that is, when a man feeleth himself grieved with his sinnes, and cannot tell where to abide, and is cast of the divell into a great feare of mind, then he alwayes runneth unto the contrary, neither can he comprehend or conceive in mind, that this is true, all things falling out of his mind, which he heard here, because of the present feeling and feare. *For the Divell hath daseled his eyes, neither can he perceive any thing else but the wrath and indignation of God. Where-with his heart is so burthened, that he is not able to raise up himselfe in mind, and to turne his eyes any other where. Nay he lyeth so drowned in it, that Christ appeareth no otherwise unto him but as an angry Iudge, as hee hath hitherto been painted out, and is so beaten into the hearts of all by the wicked Papists, sitting on the raine-bow, with a sword coming out of his mouth. For this is one of the most deceitfull crafts of the divell, yea and of his mischiefs which he practiseth against the miserable sheepe, to dase his eyes, that he may not know any more his own shepheard, and under a pretence of Christ to lead a man to Moses, disputing as much of Christ, as he had accustomed to doe before of Moses. Wherefore we have need of a strong and firme faith, that we may believe these things to be true, when a man himselfe must dispute even against himselfe. For the sense is vehement of it selfe, whereunto the Divell also commeth marvelously amplyfying sinne and terrour, the greatnesse and anguish whereof is able to consume even the marrow in the bones, yea and the heart in the body. It cannot therefore be perfectly learned so soone as some think. In prosperitie it is easily believed that Christ is sweet and amiable, but anguish and terrour coming upon and overwhelming the mind, man is blind and without good understanding, and will Iudge only according to the sense and understanding of his own heart, which he followeth, and confirmeth himselfe in his own errour. For he is taken therein, and can thinke no otherwise, but that it is true, and neverthelesse it is not true. Now it were a point of this art, for a man thus to say unto his heart, if thou confesse thy selfe to be a lost sheepe, thou sayest right: but that thou wilt therefore run from Christ, and so think of him in thy mind, as though he were a myn, which would chase and terrifie thee, it is a suggestion and temptation of the Divell. For if thou didst rightly consider*

consider him, and confesse him as thy true sheheard, then wouldest thou not flie from his sight, neither wouldest conceive terror in thy mind, but with all cheerfullnesse and boldnesse would runne unto him. For surely he is not therefore readie at hand that he may condemne thee, but he commeth to thee, seeking thee, that having laid thee on his shoulders he may carrie thee, and exempt and deliver thee from sinnes, errours, the Divell and his power, yea and from all perrill. Thou perceivest therefore that thou art a sinner, and hast deserved indignation, so much more earnestly is that sheheard to be sought and called for of thee, that he may deliver thee from it: of whom consider no otherwise in thy mind, then the shep doth of his own sheheard, whom it cannot feare, but seeing and hearing him becommeth glad and cheerfull, although it hath run from him, so that for this deed it hath a sufficient cause to feare. The whole matter therefore consisteth only in this, that thou doe perfectly learne Christ aright, and consider him according to the word of God, and not according to the proper cogitations of thy mind, and thine own senses. For the cogitations of men are false and lying, but his words are true and cannot deceive. Wherefore the word alone is to be engraven in our heart, and we must cleave unto it with a constant mind, whereby we may reprove our own heart of lying. For it alone must be true, and all things else that are contrary to it false and vain. But truly this is an art, whereof I am ignorant, but much more those other light spirits, who boast many things of it, as they that know all things, when as they have even once heard any thing thereof, and neverthelesse they doe not a little perceive or try so much as any whit of it. For it is an easie thing to speak and preach of it, but how hard a thing it is to prove it indeed, they only have experience, who earnestly make tryall thereof. *This is a most amiable demonstration of our Christ, discribed by himselfe in this Gospell, wherein he hath most abundantly powred forth the flames of his most fervent heart, and affection toward us, shewing that he hath exceeding great care and regard to recover his shep, which alone leaving ninety and nine he seeketh and enquireth diligently for, not to terrifie it and hate it, but that he may helpe it, and having found it, may bring it home, and with his loving and sweet voice and speaking unto it may cheere it being miserable and afflicted in conscience.* By all which thou seest, how acceptable a thing thou shalt do unto him, if thou trust and cleave unto him with thy whole heart, and promise to thy selfe from him all goodnesse and love. Secondly thou plainly seest this also, how by all manner of outward signes and meanes, hee powreth forth his joy and unspeakable goodnesse, and also having found his shep, how loving he is therewith himselfe. For surely he dealeth not with it by any law, as by his right he might deale, and drive it before him as he doth the rest, or suffer it to goe by him. Howbeit he doth none of these, but layeth it upon his shoulders, and all the journey carrieth it through

through the desert, taking all the labour and trouble upon himselfe, that at the least wise the sheep may rest. Neither doth he it grudgingly but willingly, for he is full of joy for his sheep recovered. Now marke this also, how well it goeth with the sheep, with how great quietnesse and ease it lyeth on his shepherds shoulders, neither doth it unwillingly see it selfe resting so sweetely being delivored from the difficulty of the journey, as also voyd of all feare both of dogges and wolves, that is, of all errors and lies, yea and of all perills and mischiefs. And this surely deserveth to be called a very pleasant picture, exceeding amiable and comfortable to be looked upon. *No otherwise doth our Lord Iesus Christ deale with us, whiles he delivereth us, which he hath once done corporallie by his passion and death, but now doth esteemes the same by his power, and spirituallie by the preaching of his word. Wherefore he layeth us upon his shoulders, carrieth & defendeth us, so that we are safe from all perills of death and the devill, which albeit they terrifie us, and shew themselves so, as though they would devour us, yet prevaile they nothing. For whereas we are carried, it is a safeguard unto us, and the same exempted us from all dangers, and putteth away all feare. As the sheep lying upon the shepherds shoulders is little carefull, though the doggs barke much, and the wolfe craftily goeth up and downe, but rather hanging downe the head is quiet and sleepeth soundly. So we also, if we stand and abide unmovable in this article, I beleeve in Iesus Christ our Lord, who suffered, died, rose againe for us, &c. there is no cause why we should be carefull least we perish, or be devoured of the devill, though he open his jawes never so wide. For we are notthen in our own way, neither walke we upon our own feet, but we hang upon the necke of our shepard, and ly upon his own shoulders, where we are safe enough. For sin, death, and hell, although indeed they be terrible, yet dare they not see upon him, otherwise if it were not for this, we should be miserable sheep, which should forthwith be brought into a lamentable and wretched case. For even as a sheep cannot take heed and foresee to it selfe, that it stray not out of the way, unlesse it be led of the shepard, and when it hath strayed and is lost, cannot by it selfe come againe to the shepard, but must be sought and inquired for of him, untill he hath found it, and so must be laid upon his shoulders and brought home againe, lest that it be againe frayed and chased from him, or catcht of the wolfe and rent in pieces: So we also our selves can profit our selves neither by helpe, nor counsell, that we might obtaine peace and quietnesse of conscience, and escape out of the hands of the devill, death, and hell, except Christ himselfe repeat his word unto us, and call us againe unto him. And although we come unto him, and now stand in faith, yet is it not in our power to keep our selves therein, or to stand by our own strength, unlesse he esteemes by the power*

power of his word, hold, lift up, and carrie us, for that the diuell alwayes imagineth and purposeth deceit and distruction toward us, and goeth about like a roaring Lyon, seeking whom he may deuoure, as St. Peter witnesseth, Wherefore here is no place to boast of free will, or of our own strength, which is none, neither in beginning any thing, neither in going forward therein, much lesse in persevering or continuing in it, but Christ our shepheard alone doth all things.

Howbeit we are sure hereof, that whiles we lye upon the shoulders of Christ, we shall remaine safe from all terrour and misfortune. For he will not suffer us to be plucked or taken from his neck, neither will he himselfe cast us off, being so glad and joyfull, that he hath found his lost sheep, and brought it againe to the rest of the flock. And in summe, here is no terror, or trouble, or exaction, but merie life and grace, whereby he handleth his sheep most lovingly and gently. But on the contrary Moses, not as a shepheard of miserable and weake sheep, but as a master of stronger cattell, driuerh his heards with a staffe and a rod three dayes journey through the desert, untill they be tyred and wearie with walking: of this shepheard those hardned and wild ones are to be tamed and bridled. And we also, when we shall be under Moses, to wit, according to the flesh and the outward life, must goe, and doe that which the law requireth. But in that we are, and are called Christians, we must by no meanes suffer, that any worke be layed upon us, yea or exacted of us, but must give our selves only to Christ to be carried and gently lifted up, not upon horses, and chariots, but even upon his only shoulders. Which cometh to passe, as I have said, when he suffereth the word to be preached unto us, and we also beleewe the same, that he dyed for us, that on the crosse he beare our sinnes in his body, that he hath ouerbrown the diuell, death, and sinnes, and put them under his feet, and hath made and opened unto us entrance to eternall life. Wherefore we must not have respect to our own life, how righteous and strong we are, but we must study upon this own thing, that we may rest lying upon his shoulders. In this circle we must haue no care of sinne, death, life, or peniuenesse, in as much as we haue all things to befull in Christ, who beareth and keepeth us. Now he is not content with all these things, both that with such great travel he seeketh his sheep, and also that having found it, he carrieth it with incredible joy, but it being brought againe, he maketh feasts all dayes, and exceedingly reioyseth, calling together his neighbours and friends that they may reioyce with him. Yea he affirmeth, That God also in heaven with the whole heauenty host, doe reioyce over one sinner that repenteth. In which words, he sheweth and declareth, who he is, which deserveth to be called his lost sheep, namely such a sinner, as being led by repentance of his former life, doth amend, most feruently desiring to be delivered from

from sinnes, and earnestly endeavouring to come unto Christ: such a one hath a miserable and troubled, yea and a contrite and humbled heart, and an afflicted conscience, which the Divell by all meanes fighteth against, and so presseth it, that it is almost overcome with distresses, &c. But Christ assisteth and comforteth him, for he is such a man; as seeketh no sheep but that which is lost, and cannot helpe it selfe. How may Christ be preached with greater gentlenesse, and more effectually consolation of words? or what thinkest thou should he doe more to cheere the mind of a sinner, and to confirme in him a sure confidence toward himselfe? For we see him set forth by himselfe to us miserable sinners, as a most loving shepherd, who most sorrowfully seeketh his sheep being lost, and most joyfully bringeth them againe being found, and taketh so great ioy, that with him all the Angels also and Saints doe rejoyce over us. Now he that could firmly beleve these things, should without doubt through Christ receive true comfort and joy, for asmuch as here he hath a certaine promise, that if he surely cleave unto Christ, and rest upon his shoulders, he shall be an acceptable and welcome guest in the kingdome of Heaven, and shall be received with exceeding great joy. But we being troubled with sorrow and anguish of conscience, have a far other feeling and affection, when as the heart can thinke nothing else, but that all the Angels doe stand behind us with a drawn sword, which feare so troubleth us, that we can conceive no cheerfulness in our mind, neither of God, nor of the Angels. And there are some also, which can behold no creature with a glad mind, fearing the beholding of the sunne, yea being sore afraid at the noise of a lease. All which proceed from hence, for that they trouble and vex themselves with their own thoughts, out of which they would willingly wrastle, sparing no labour, that they might feele their uprightness and integritie in them, which would be abashed with no feare. But if thou be desirous to conceive true comfort and ioy in thy heart, then see that thou doe diligently and well print and fasten therein this amiable image of the most loving shepherd, and the word of the Gospell, and seeke it where it is to be sought, that is in Christ and no where else; for in this man thou shalt find all things, so that thou abide in his late end, and upon his shoulders. But whatsoever comfort can be obtained without him, it commeth not from the heart, although thoueall to help thee all the creatures, and shouldest also be partaker of the pleasure and joy of the whole world. **The ninth Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, of the Woman of Canaan.** *Matth. 15. Verse 21. to the 28. And Iesus went thence and departed into the parts of Tyrus, &c.* IN this text is set forth unto us an example of a constant and stedfast faith. For this woman did so persevere, that shee overcame three most sharpe conflicts, and notably teacheth us, what is the qualitie and proper vertue of a true and right faith. Which indeed is a certaine trust, and most

most deeply settled in the mind, of the divine goodnesse and grace, known and made manifest by the word of God. For Mark mentioneth that shee heard the report of Iesus, without doubt good and joyfull, that he is a bountifull man, and marvelous ready to helpe every one. That report was good tydings and the word of grace unto her, whereupon also this her faith did begin. For unlesse she had believed that she also might be made partaker of Christs bountifullnesse and goodnesse, she would not have so followed him, or cryed after him. Which is that whereof we have often admonished, and which we are taught, *Rom. 10. That faith is by hearing* Wherefore the word ought alwayes to goe before, and give the begining of saluation. But how came it to passe, whereas many other also heard the same report of our Saviour Iesus, yet they followed him not, yea they quite dispised that report? I answer. They that are not sick, as they have no need of the Physitian, neither are they desirous of him. But this woman was afflicted and felt her necessity, yea that report was so joyfull unto her, that shee being stirred up thereby, did follow Christ, running after such a pleasant savour, *Can. 1.* Wherefore *Moses* must alway goe before, who may teach us to feele sinne, whereby grace may be wished for and desired of us. It is in vaine therefore, although Christ be preached to be loving, and to be desired and longed for, if a man be not before humbled through knowledge of himselfe, and made desirous of Christ, according to the song of *Marie: the Lord hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away.* Now all these things are written for the consolation and lifting up of them which be miserable, poore, needie, oppressed with sinne, and abjects, that they may know to whom they may flee in al distress, & where they may seek for help & succour. But see how Christ vrgeth and inflameth faith in them that be his, whereby they may become stronger and more confirmed. For first, whereas this woman being encouraged with that alluring fame of his, goeth after him, & cryed for help, doubting nothing but she should trie him to be such a one, as she had heard him reported to be, and that she should forthwith intreat him for the recovery of her daughter: Christ in all respects sheweth himselfe unto her so, as though he would deceive all her trust, and make his report false, so that shee might think with her selfe: Is this that man which is so bountifull and ready to help all? Doth he so fulfill the most commendable report which goeth of him? Where doth there appeare so much as any thing like unto those things, which men have told me of him? They were deceived themselves and deceived me also. He sheweth himselfe an enemy rather then a friend. Why doth he not so much as speake a word, and friendly denie me help, if I be unworthy thereof? He holdeth his peace like unto a block, and vouchsaferh not to speake a word, neither offereth his help. Here surely Christ gave a grievous blow to the mind of the silly woman. So it is an incomparable torment

ment to them that beleve, being in distresse, when God sheweth himselfe such a one at their prayers, like unto one that is angry, and whom they pray unto in vaine, hiding so deeply his grace, that they now perceive nothing else, but that he will not performe those things which he hath promised, and that so he will shew his own words to be false. That truly happened to the Israelites at the red sea, and to many other excellent holy men. But what doth this woman to these things? Shee removeth out of her sight and mind, that Christ sheweth himselfe so ungentle and hard to be intreated, shee being constant & nothing moved hereat, persevereth in the trust of his goodness, whercof shee had heard, & which shee had conceived in her mind, suffering her selfe in no wise to be turned from it. So also must we doe, we must trust unto the word alone, although God himselfe and all creatures pretended otherwise then the word teacheth. But this is the most hard to nature and reason, to be so utterly destitute, and to depend on the word of God without any feeling of comfort, even when a man feeleth and tryeth all things to be contrary. God give unto us such a mind and faith, that we may so doe, especially at the poynt of death and in extreame necessities. Secondly, whereas the crie and faith of this woman seemeth to have suffered repulse, the disciples come with their faith, doubting not but that they shall intreat the Lord, but when they think that they shall make him more easie to be intreated, they find him to be much more hard, repelling as it appeared, and as they thought, the faith and prayers both of the woman and also of themselves. Neither doth Christ here hold his peace, and leave them in doubt, as before, but he seemeth plainly to deny that which they aske, saying: *I am not sent but so the lost sheep of the house of Israel.* This stroke is much more grievous then that former, where not only the person of the intreater, is repelled, but all hope also which is wont to be left, is cut off, namely the comfort of the intercession of all the other Saints and elect. For it is almost the last refuge to them that suffer distress and feeble indignation of God, to get themselves to good and godly men: seeking for comfort and help, whereunto, as the charitie requireth, they find them ready and willing, but even they also some time doe in vaine aske help and succour, for neither are they heard, and so the case of them that be in distresse becometh worse and more lamentable. So the afflicted and desolare may truly object unto Christ all those words, wherein he hath promised that he will heare his Saints, as: *If two of you shall agree in earth upon any thing whatsoever they shall desire, it shall be given them of my Father which is in Heaven.* Again, *Whatsoever ye shall aske, beleve, and ye shall receive it.* And many such like. But if to him that objecteth these things, and asketh him how he can goe from his words and promises, he answer thus: *I goe not from my promises, I have not promised that I will heare all prayers, but the prayers of them that be mine,* which



which are of the house of *Israel*, not of all whatsoever. What thinkest thou, may thy heart then thinke having taken such a repulse? Such an answer is as it were a flash of lightning, wherewith the heart and all trust is severed and broken in a thousand peices. For what trust can there be left, when he heareth that that doth not pertaine unto him, which because of the word of God he trusted to have obtained, but unto others. Here not so much as a word can be left, if one doe according as he feelleth. But what doth this woman? *She doth not so fall from hope, shee still sticketh to the words which shee had heard of Christ*, albeit he went about by this other repulse as with a certaine force to wrest them out of her heart, she suffereth not her selfe to be frayed away neither with that ungentle silence, neither with this hard answer, she continueth stedfastly in a sure confidence, believing that under this difficultie which Christ did present, that grace was as yet hidden and laid up for her, which shee had heard reported of him, she cannot be brought *As yet to iudge Christ not to be bountifull and gracious, and that he can deny her helpe which shee desireth*. This was to persevere strongly in faith. Moreover the followeth Iesus even into the house, as *Marke* writeth, she is instant upon him, falleth down before him, and saith: *Lord helpe me*. Here the Lord giveth a deadly and the last blow saying unto her face, that she is a dogge, and unworthy to be partaker of the bread of the children. What may she answer hereunto? For he seemed to signifie in these words that she is of the number of the damned and desperate, which can looke for no part with the Elect. This word seemeth eternall and that cannot be gainesaid: For he which doth not pertaine to the company of the Elect by the ordinance of God, what may he hope to be left for him? This woman is not yet discouraged and past hope, but yeeldeth to this judgement of the Lord, she confesseth of her own accord, that she is a dogge, neither desireth she any thing but that which is wont to be given to dogs, namely the crums which falleth from their masters table. Seemeth she not to have used marvelous cunning? She taketh Christ in his own words. He had made her like unto a dog, that acknowledgeth it, and desireth that he will only suffer her to be a dogge according to his own saying: what should he here doe? how should he escape? he was now as it were even taken. For the crummes under the table are granted to the dogge, for unto dogges they are said to be due. Here therefore Christ being as it were overcome, doth open himselfe wholly, and granteth the desires of the woman, and maketh that shee is not now a dogge, but a true *Israelite*. These things are written for the instruction and comfort of all us, whereby we ought to learne, how deeply sometime Christ hideth his grace from us, and how we must not iudge of God according to our own sense and opinion, but only according to his words. For we see here that albeit Christ shewed himselfe, very hard to this woman, yet he did not plainly deny to help her but whatsoever he answered, howsoever it

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seemed to pretend a denyall, yet was it not a denyall, but did hang in doubt, and left an entrance for faith, although but small. For he said not at her first petition: I will not heare her, but he held his peace, neither promising nor denying helpe. So to the second petition, which the Apostles made, he saith not: *she is not of the house of Israel*. I cannot therefore performe that which she desireth, but he only saith: *I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*, leaving all things in doubt, and in the midst between a plaine grant and a denyall. So when she had the third time desired him, he saith not: *thou art a dog, get thee hence, the bread of the children is not due unto thee*, but he saith: *It is not good to take the childrens bread, &c.* againe leaving in doubt, whether she was a dogge or no. Nevertheless all these sayings doe pretend outwardly rather a denyall of helpe, then provoke her to hope, but in very deed they did containe in them rather a promise and hope, then a denyall. Yea there was nothing but a promise and a certaine expectation of helpe, (howbeit most deeply hid and altogether secret) under that silence and answers, although they were hard, and a denyall only sounded outwardly. By these it is shewed how our heart is wont to be affected in tentation. For according as that feeleth in tentation, so Christ here beheveth himselfe. It feeleth all things to be denyed, when as it is farre otherwise. Wherefore it is requisite, that leaving his own feeling, by a sure faith in the word of God it conceive and hold fast the promise of helpe deeply hidden under the denyall, and yeeld unto the sentence of God toward us, as this woman did, so shall we overcome and take the Lord in his words, that he cannot but helpe us. So that if we feele in our conscience at any time God rebuking us, pronouncing us sinners, and unworthy of the Kingdome of heaven, then we feele as it were Hell, and it seemeth unto us that we are past all hope and recoverie for ever: then if any had the skill of this woman, that he could take the Lord in his own judgement and say: yea Lord, *I am a sinner, and altogether unworthy of thy grace, but thou hast promised forgivenessse to sinners, neither didst thou come to call the righteous, but as Paul saith, to save sinners*: hee truly should bring to passe that the Lord should be enforced, even by his own judgement to have mercy upon him. So did Manasses, when being penitent he prayed for pardon, as we read in his prayer: *He yielded to the judgement of God, acknowledging himselfe a most grievous sinner, and so he bound God with his promise, which had promised forgivenessse of sinne to sinners, not to the righteous*. The same also did David observe, Psal. 51. *Against thee only, saith he, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight, that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and found pure when thou art judged*. For that doth purchase unto us all displeasure, that we should daigne to suffer the judgement of the Lord, and doe against our wils yeeld unto his sentence, when he pronounceth us sinners. Such a great thing is it to

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acknowledge sinnes, and to embrace the judgement of God. We all confesse our selves sinners in words, but as soone as the Lord speaketh that in our heart, and pronounceth us sinners, we doe not abide by that which before we confessed, we had rather be counted righteous and free from that judgement. But it must needs be, if God must be just in his words, that thou be a sinner, then also mayst thou use the right of sinners, which God himselfe hath given unto them, *namely to pray unto a sure expectation of forgiveness of sinnes*. Then is it not permitted unto thee only to feed under the table of crummes as the manner of dogges; but being a child of the household, thou shalt sit at the *very table*, having God now how great favour be he, given unto thee according to thy desire. Hereof also we have an historicall exposition of this text according to the allegories. For as it chanceth to this woman her daughter being sick, *for whom through faith she obtained health by a miracle*: so also it falleth out with us, when we are delivered from the spirituall sicknesse to wit sinnes, which truly are a most grievous and troublesome Divell unto us. *For as she acknowledged her selfe a dogge*, so must we acknowledge our selves sinners and judged unto Hell, the Lord pronouncing it, which if we can doe as she could, we shall be safe. We have already spoken elsewhere of other things, whereof there might be occasion to speake out of this text, as how one may obtaine grace and safety by the faith of another, as here it fell out to the daughter of this woman. This thing also (that Christ, his Disciples, and the woman, are here examples of love, forasmuch as none of them pray for, seeke or doe those things that are their owne, but every one that which is anothers) is very manifest by it selfe, and easily acknowledged of every one, especially seeing that we have so largely entertained hereof in another place.

**A Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, wherein is taught that we are saved freely by grace, without the workes and meritts of man.** Tit. 3. Verse 4. *to the 7.*

*When that bountifullnesse and that love of God our Saviour toward, &c.*

**P**aul having willed before that all should be put in mind to be obedient to such as be in authority, and ready to every good worke, to speake evill of no man, to be no fighters, but gentle, shewing all meeknesse unto all men, &c. these few words being put between, that we our selves were in times past unwise, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and voluptuousnesse, &c. he added those words which we have already mentioned, as if he should say: Wherefore should it grieve us to deserve so well of all men, when as God hath before dealt so bountifully, kindly, and gently with us, with whom without comparison, we are lesse and have lesse of him deserved, then any being compared to us can be, or can deserve of us? As therefore God hath with exceeding bountifullnesse and kindnesse most gently behaved himselfe toward us, of his mercy granting and giving unto us all things: so ought we to doe all things

things with all charity and good will toward our neighbours, albeit they have otherwise deserved, forasmuch as we are like unto them, subject to all sinnes and evill desires. Here we see how the Apostle will have us to be affected towards men: He will have us subject to them that be in authority, kind unto others, and ready to doe well unto them with all gentlenesse, although they be evill, blind, and in error, that we grudge not to beare these things, and as much as lyeth in us, endeavour to doe them good, taking all things in good part, considering that God hath so dealt with us, when we were evill and wicked, like unto them.

This word, *appeared*, we have else where declared to signifie the revelation of the Gospel, whereby Christ appeared in the world: Albeit the unskilfulnesse of Ministers, hath wrested it to the carnall nativity of Christ. He useth not here the word *grace*, which he useth before, but hath set in stead thereof two other words of marvelous comfort, *Tit. 2. 11.* [*bountifulnes, and love towards men*] which he attributeth to our God. The first is called of the Grecians *Chrestotes*, and is that kindnes, gentlenes and sweetness of conditions, wherewith they that be endued, with them all of us are with pleasure conversant, and marvelously delighted with their companie, so that they doe with this their gentlenes and kindnes allure and greatly provoke all men to love them. For such can suffer all without griefe: they contemn no man: they repell or put none from them with bitter, hard, and disordered conditions: access unto them is not hard, but they are so open, and ready for all, that every one dare resort unto them, and desire their help. And to conclude: they are such men as the Gospel describes Christ unto us, whom they declare to be gentle to all, a despiser of none, which denieth no benefit to any, pliant, prepared and ready to doe good to all. So God also by the Gospel is preached and offered unto us wholly good, bountifull and sweet, open to all, rejecting none, bearing all our sinnes and offences, repelling no man from him with excessive severitie. For we read and heare nothing to be declared in the Gospel but meeke grace, and meeke goodnes, whereby he doth most mercifully heare us, and most gently handle us, and not any man according to his deserts. This is the time of grace, wherein it is granted to all to goe with great boldnes unto the throne of grace, as it is written *Heb. 4.* and *Psal. 34.* *Come unto him, and be enlightened, and your faces shall not be ashamed*, that is, he will not suffer you to pray, and come in vaine, neither to returne with confusion being frustrate. The other word is *Philanthropia*, love of men, as covetousnes may be called love of money, as *David 2. Sam. 1.* calleth the desire of women, the love of women. And the Philosophers call certaine living creatures *Philanthropa*, that is loving toward men, as are horses, dogges, dolphines. For these creatures are by nature delighted with man, they desire his company, and do willingly serve him as though they were moved

moved with some reason and sense of humanitie. This name, and such love the Apostle here attributeth to our God, *which Moses also did before him, Deut. 33.* where he speaketh thus of God: *The Lord appeared having in his right hand a law of fire, and he loved the people.* The meaning therefore of the Apostle is this: Our God hath in the Gospel shewed himselfe unto us not only bountifull, kind, gentle, and sweet, which can beare, and will receive all, but also he so loveth us, that of his own accord he adjoyneth himselfe unto us, seeketh to have to doe with us, voluntarily sheweth and offereth his grace and bountifulnesse unto us, and most gently embraceth as many as only doe not refuse his grace and love, and desire to draw nigh unto him. What should he doe more? Who cannot see hereby, why we count the Gospel a preaching, joyfull and full of all consolation of God in Christ? For what can be spoken more lovingly and sweetly to a sinfull and afflicted conscience, then these words? O lamentable case, how miserably hath Satan by the lawes of his Pope oppressed and obscured this soveraigne sinceritie of the word of God.

Now let no man restraints these two words (*bountifulnesse and love toward men*) to the persons for God is plainly without respect of persons bountifull to all, and a lover of all, otherwise if we should here make a difference between men, we should acknowledge that some thing is received through our merits, and not all things through his mercy. Where it must be well marked that God is said to be a lover of men, not of this or that nature only, nor held with love of the person, and therefore these two, *bountifulnesse and love toward men*, must be taken after a generall sort, that in all things the chiefe praise may be attributed to his mercie, that no man trust in his own merits, neither be terrified with sinnes, but that altogether doe trust to his grace, which he voluntarily offereth unto us, with so great kindnesse and love towards us. For if any respect of person might be had here, it should surely be had of them, which are rich in the workes of righteousness, but Paul expressly rejecteth these saying: *Not by the workes of righteousness which we had done.* How much lesse then shall this bountifulnesse and love of our God toward men appeare because of any mans wisdom, power, nobilitie, riches or any such thing, when as no respect is had of workes of righteousness? Great is the grace of God toward us, which appeareth in the Gospel, yea and nothing but grace, which admitteth no merit at all of ours, utterly taketh away all boasting and glorying, and setteth forth the glory of God alone, who freely giveth it unto us being unworthy. So in this text the two, *faith and love*, are taught to receive benefits of God, and bestow them on our neighbours, which the Scripture doth very often repeat, so that even the doctrine of saluation consisteth wholly in them, neither can one be separated from the other. For he that doth not firmly trust in the divine grace,

cannot but be remisse and slow to doe well to his neighbour, and so witnesse the faintesse and weaknesse of faith, which is the fountaine of all duties and benefits: As contrariwise the stronger faith that one is indued with, so much more dutifully ~~or~~ with readier mind he endeavoreth to deserve well of his neighbours. All both doctrine and life worthy of Christ, (that all things may be declared most briefly, manifestly and sufficiently) consist of these two, faith and love. Whereby man is made as it were a meane between God and his neighbour, that he may receive of God from above, and give to his neighbours beneath, and be as it were a conduit pipe, through which the fountaine of the divine goodnesse doth continually flow to his neighbours. And such men are like unto God, which in Christ receive of God whatsoever he hath, and doe againe by their good deeds declare themselves as it were the gods of other, and fulfill the prophesie of the Prophet, Psalme 82. *I have said ye are gods, and yee all are children of the most high.* We are children of the most high by faith, whereby of nothing we are made the heires of God. And we are gods by love, which maketh us beneficiall to our neighbour: forasmuch as the nature of God is nothing but bountifulnesse, and Paul here saith: the bountifulnesse and love of God toward men, which he doth with incomparable plenty daily powre forth upon every one, as we see. We must only endeavour, that every one doe nothing doubt that these things are spoken to him, that the bountifulnesse and love of God to manward is revealed and offered to every one, that by these words he may establish, exercise, and strengthen his faith, being certaine that they are most true, and that God both undoubtedly is, and alwayes will be bountifull and loving toward him. If thou canst believe this, it will assuredly so come unto thee: thou mayest then with a full confidence pray and desire of him whatsoever thou wilt, and complaine unto him of whatsoever doth grieve thee or other. But if thou want this faith, it had been better for thee never to have heard any thing hereof, for that by thy infidelitie thou reproveest of falshood these words so precious and full of consolation and grace making so light account of them, as not beleeving that they be true. Which surely is a great contempt and dishonour of God, that scarce a more grievous sinne can be committed of thee. Contrariwise if thou be indued with this faith, it cannot be, but that thy heart being thereby cheered, should even as it were laugh and leap for holy joy in God, being voide of all care and trouble, and be made above measure confident. For how can any discouragement, any whit of sorrow remaine in that heart, which doubteth not that God is gracious and bountifull unto it, and beareth a singular affection of love toward it, that it is a delight and pleasure unto him to doe it good, and enjoy it as a friend? Surely the heart is necessarily delighted with this spirituall joy and pleasure, or undoubtedly it wanteth faith. Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians call: th  
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this, to receive the holy Ghost by the Gospel. For the Gospel is so pleasant a preaching of the grace and goodnesse of God, that while it is preached and heard, it bringeth the holy Ghost with it, no otherwise then the beams of the sunne doe naturally bring heat with them. How could the Apostle use more pleasant and sweet words? I dare say that I have in the whole Scripture read none more pleasant, and so sweet words of the grace of God, as these two, *Chrestotes, Philanthropia*, that is, bountifullnesse, and love toward men, in which the grace of God is so described, as whereby he doth not only forgive our sinnes, but doth also desire to be conversant with us, and is ready to doe the part of a very friend toward us, voluntarily offering himselfe to helpe us in all things, also to bestow more benefits upon us then we can desire or aske, that we may presume of him no otherwise then of a most neare and familiar friend, of whom we may obtaine all things, in whose eyes we are most deare, and even delightful. Thinke in thy mind of a most perfect friend, which hath fulfilled all the parts of friendship toward thee, and thou shalt have after a sort a forme, although yet farre unlike, of the divine goodnesse and kindnesse, which is here attributed to our God, by the name of bountifullnesse and love toward men. But when thou hast a sound faith in this bountifullnesse and love to manward, and thereby doest live in thy God, so bountifull, gracious, and gentle to thee, rejoycest, and art full of all good things, being certain of his continuall grace, what shouldest thou do any longer in earth? what in this life? Thou canst not in this case be idle, as surely that love of God and pleasure which thou enjoyest in him will not suffer thee to be idle. Thou shalt be inflamed with a marvelous studie and desire to doe what things soever thou canst know will be an honour unto thy God, so loving and bountifull unto thee, and will turne to praise, glory, and thanksgiving unto him. Thou shalt have no choise of workes, thou shalt passe for no precept, thou shalt feelee no compulsion of the law, having a most ready will and pleasure to doe, whatsoever things thou shalt know to be acceptable unto God, whether they be contemptible or noble, small or great, thou shalt count them alike. But first of all it shall be thy desire, that this blessed knowledge of God may be common also to the rest, whereupon by and by thy love will here shew it selfe, and will assay all meanes, to make this truth of saluation manifest unto all, it will publish and repeat it, wheresoever it shall be able, rejecting and condemning whatsoever other either teach or say, that agreeth not with this truth. Whereby it will come to passe, that Satan and the world, which heare nothing so unwillingly as this truth, and cannot abide that their things should be condemned, will rise against thee with all their might, will by and by trouble thee, all the great, learned, rich and mighty of the world will condemne thee of heresie and madnesse, and will leave no meanes unattempted untill if they be able they have

dispatcht thee of thy life. Thus with Christ thy Lord thou shalt be persecuted, and suffer extreame ignominie, thy body, life, goods, name, friends, and all things benig brought into perill, untill they have thrust thee from them out of this life into the eternall and blessed life: In the meane season thou must suffer all these things with a patient mind, and take them in good part, loosing none of the spirituall ioy, which thou hast of Christ in thy God, and for thy part shewing to thy persecutors all kindnesse and love, being alwayes mindfull, that thou a little before was not much unlike them before God. All which things thou shalt doe through faith and love, albeit they exceed the strength of nature. And this indeed is a true Christian life, wherein thou doest endeavour to do so to other, as God hath done to thee. *Not by the workes of righteousness which we had done.* In these words the Apostle signifieth that which we have now said, and proveth it as it were by rendring a reason. For if the bountifullnesse and love of God to manward hath appeared, and he hath saved us of his mercy, and not because of our own righteousness, yea we being by all meanes unworthy, and subject to innumerable sinnes, it is meet that we also doe good to them that have not deserved so much of us, and are unworthy thereof. For we which are become the sonnes of God, must resemble God our father, and bestow benefites according to our abilitie as well upon our enemies and persecutors, as upon our friends and them that do good unto us. Whereof Christ also hath admonished us. *Mat. 5. Love your enemies, that ye may be the children of your father which is in heaven, who maketh his sunne to shine upon the good and evill, and sendeth raine on the just and unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward shall ye have? when as even the heathen and Publicans doe the same.* Now the Apostle doth not only exprelly condemn us for evill workes, but saith: *Not by the workes of righteousness, or, which we have done in righteousness.* Where he also rejecteth those workes, which we counted righteous, and were thought both of us and others to have been done in righteousness, when as they were so farre from being righteous, that they made us unworthy of the grace of God, and more unfit to receive it, for they are deceitfull workes, whereunto we add this sinne, that we thinke them righteous, and trust in them, whereby God is provoked to anger more then can be said, even as our enemies are wont to move us to anger, when as they will avouch those things to be just, wherein they sinne and doe unjustly. But even as God, when we being unwise, by errour moved him to anger, counting our sinnes workes of righteousness, did not therefore reject us, but of his meere mercy delivered us from this errour and sinnes: so we neglecting the foolishnesse and dorage of our adversaries, whereby they contend that sinnes are to be counted for righteousness, ought neverthelesse of meere love, having no respect of evill or good deserts, to be beneficall unto them

them, and endeavour to doe them good in all things, looking for fruit of our benefites not of them, but of God alone. Let these things suffice to have been spoken for a compendious and generall exposition of this text.

Now let us also briefly wey the words, wherein he setteth forth and commendeth the grace of God. First he so greatly extolleth it, that in respect of it he condemneth all our good woꝝkes and righteousness: neither doth he condemne a small thing, when he condemneth our righteousness or righteous woꝝkes, the most excellent thing that man can have in earth. For if all men with all their might should labour and endeavour to attaine to most exact prudence, wisdom, and liberty of mind and will, which we read that some Philosophers and Princes have done, as *Socrates, Traianus*, and many other, whose fame the whole world hath long since spread abroad both by words and writings: nevertheless all such wisdom, and all such vertues are nothing but sinnes before God, forasmuch as they be not done in and by the grace of God. Doers of such vertues are ignorant of God, and therefore they cannot honour him by their studies and endeavours, they thinke they have all things of themselves, when as no man can have any good thing at all, but of his grace alone, which the Gospel preacheth. So *Paul* glorieth, that he, before he knew *Christ*, lived a blamelesse life, and was more zealous toward the law then those of his age, that he also thought, that he did a thing acceptable to God by persecuting the *Christians*, which condemned that blamelesse life which he led, but afterward when he had learned *Christ*, he saith, that he counteth that righteousness to be but dung, that he might be found not in such righteousness, but in *Christ* by faith. *Phil.*

3. The same thing he witnesseth and encreaseth of at large in the Epistles to the *Galatians* and *Colossians*. Here therefore is condemned all boasting of free will, mans strength, righteousness, and good woꝝkes, and it is concluded, that they are all nothing but sinnes, and certaine destruction, although they have a faire shew, that they are saved by the only grace of God, as many of us as beleeve, and call for it, with acknowledging of our own vanity and perdition. Now we must accustome our selves to the Scripture, which maketh mention of two sorts of righteousness, one humane, which *Paul* here and in many other places hath mentioned, the other divine, even that grace of saluation, which iustificeth us by faith, whereof he speaketh in the end of this text: That being iustified by grace, we should be heires of eternall life. Here thou seest plainly that the grace of God is our true righteousness, whereby we are iustified, which is therefore called the righteousness of God, for that it is given unto us of God, and is made ours, when we are made partakers thereof by faith. Of this he speaketh also, *Rom. 1.* In the Gospel is revealed the righteousness of God from faith to faith, as it is written: The iust shall live by faith. And *Gen. 15.* Abraham believed, and it was counted to him



*Him for righteousness.* Whereupon the Scripture concludeth, that no man is counted righteous before God, but he that beleeueth, as the Apostle testifieth, where he reciteth that saying of *Habacuk*: *The iust shall live by faith.* So it appeareth that faith, grace, mercie, truth, righteousness, that all these are that same which God worketh in us by Christ and the Gospel. Whereupon it is said, *Psal. 25. All the wayes of the Lord are mercie and truth.* For those are the wayes of the Lord in which we observing his commandements, doe walke, and he againe in us, now those wayes must be directed by his mercie and truth alone, not by our strength and industrie, forasmuch as our wayes being ordered hereby, are nothing but vanitie before God, and doe deserve his wrath. According to that which the Lord saith, *Esay 55. As farre as the heauen is higher then the earth, so farre doe my wayes exceed yours.* As if he should say: Your righteousness is earthly and of no value, wherefore yee must bid it farewell and walke in mine, if ye hope for salvation. *But according to his mercy he saved us.* It is marvell how the credit of these words can stand, wherin the Apostle affirmeth that we are already saved, although living yet in earth, and therefore in continuall miserie. But he did so speake, that he might more fully expresse the power of the divine grace, and the nature of faith against hypocrites, who as though salvation were yet farre off, doe in vaine endeavour to get and obtaine it by their works. For Christ hath already saved us: he hath performed all things which are required hereunto, that we may be saved: he hath overcome and subdued sinne, death, hell, &c. so that he hath left nothing, for any man to care for, he hath also given all these things unto us in Baptisme, that whosoever beleeueth in Christ, that he hath performed them, hath them together in the same moment, so that he hath need of nothing more unto salvation, but faith alone, that he may firmly beleeve that these things are so performed. But mark how incomparable riches of his grace God hath poured upon us in Baptisme, who hath delivered us even from those works, wherby those foolish holy ones go about to meritt heaven, & to be saved. For we must have heaven, and be saved before we can do any good works, for that works cannot meritt heaven, but heaven being before given of meer grace, causeth us to do good works, & that for no hope of meritt or reward, but only to the commoditie of our neighbours, & the glory of God, untill this body also be delivered from sinne and death.

Wherefore all the life of a Christian after Baptisme is nothing else, but an expectation of salvation and felicitie to be revealed, which they that beleeve in Christ doe now possesse, although hidden. They have all things now certainly, but they are yet hid in faith, which when as it is changed, knowledge being revealed, all things as they now have them, shall appeare, which shall come to passe, when pleasant and wished death cometh, according to that saying of *Iohn*: 1. *Iohn 3. 2. Dearly beloved*

beloued, now are we the sonnes of God, and yet it doth not appeare what we shall be: But we know that when he shall appeare, we shall be like him. And every man that hath this hope in him, purgeth himselfe, even as he is pure. Wherefore suffer not thy selfe to be deceived, and to be seduced from this truth by those hypocrites, which contemning faith, doe falsely affirme that saluation is farre from thee, and teach thee to endeavour in vaine to attaine unto it by thy workes. It is in thy selfe, if thou beleeue that all things are performed by Christ, even as he himselfe witnesseth: *The kingdom of God is within you, Luke. 17.* So that all our life after Baptisme ought to be nothing else but an expectation that that should be revealed which is already in us, and that we may comprehend, as we are comprehended, as Paul saith *Philip. 3.* I follow if that I may comprehend that, for whose sake also I am comprehended of Christ, that is, that I may at length see those things which are given me, being as yet in the shut closet of faith. He covereth, and burneth with desire to see the treasure which by faith he received both given and sealed in Baptisme. Whereupon he addeth in the same place: *Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for our Saviour Iesus Christ, who shall change our vile bodie, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious bodie.* Herewith also agreeeth that which he saith *Gal. 4.* *Ye know God,* and by and by he doth as it were correct that which he had said, *Tea,* saith he, rather are ye knowne, both which are true, although not after the likesort: We are now knowne of God, so that he comprehendeth us, and we indeed know God, but we doe not yet comprehend, for that our knowledge is as yet hidden and closed up in faith. He saith moreover *Rom. 8* *We are saved by hope,* that is, we are saved, although we yet see it not, for that which one seeth, he hopeth not for, but if we hope for those things which we see not, we doe with patience abide for them. Christ confirmeth this *Luke, 12.* *Let your loynes be gird about, and your lights burning, and ye your selves like unto men that wait for their master, when he will returne from the wedding, that when he cometh, and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.* In which words he only bideth them that be hitherto be ready to look for him the bridegrome, as which are already saved being admitted into the number of his ministers. Hereunto also pertaineth that which the Apostle saith *Tit. 2:* *Let us live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and appearing of the glorie of that mighty God, and our Saviour Iesus Christ.* In these and such like places whereof thou maist read many here and there in the holy Scriptures, he witnesseth that we are already saved, and that it doth not behove, that a Christian man should first seek to attaine to saluation by his workes. This opinion and devilish doctrine blindeth the eyes of Christians, extinguisheth the knowledge of faith, and carrieth men from the way of truth and saluation. We must cleave  
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unto that which the Apostle here saith: *He hath saved us according to his mercie, and which he addeth in the end of this text, that we are beirenes according to the hope of eternall life.* We are now heires, but that is hidden in faith, but we look with a certaine hope, that hereafter it shall be revealed. And God will have us so to look for the revelation of this inheritance, and to live a certaine time after Baptisme, that he may chastise our body by our ministry, and declare the power of his grace in fight against the flesh, the world and the devill, but especially for this cause, that by us he may help our neighbours, and both by doctrine, and also by our life which he liveth in us, may bring them to the communion of faith. And albeit he can doe this by Angels, yet it pleaseth him rather that it should be done by us men, that both the manner of faith may be the better known, and that all things may be done sweetly and lovingly. For if Angels should alwayes have to doe with us, there should not be so much faith, neither should it be so pleasant, as when we are taught and guided by them that are partakers of our nature, whom we doe better know, and with whom we doe more familiarly associate our selves, And so, that there may be some, by whom other also may be converted both by doctrine and good examples, it is not meet that wee should by and by after Baptisme be taken into heaven, wherein notwithstanding we are already admitted citizens. Hereupon if one weigh all things rightly, it cannot be doubted, that it is a pactice and miracle of Satan and Antichrist, that so much is spent for purgatorie sake, such faith as this being put quite out of mens mindes. For men are taught by their workes to save themselves from Purgatorie, or at the least to deliver themselves out from thence, as though salvation were not yet given us, and it were necessarie to come unto it by other meanes then by faith alone, which how it disagreeeth with the Scripture and a Christian life, there is no man that doth not see, but he that seeth nothing in the Scripture. For thus the holy Scriptures doe teach every where, that whoever doth not receive salvation by meere grace, through faith before all workes, he shall never be partaker thereof. And that whosoever referre their good workes, not to the profit of their neighbour but to their own commoditie, being more carefull of their own salvation then of their neighbours, have no good workes at all. All the workes of these are voyde of faith, and infected with pernicious error. It had been greatly to be wished that Purgatorie had never been invented, and never mention made thereof in the pulpit for it hath been such cause of hindrance to Christian veritie and sincere truth, as cannot be recovered. For we see it now brought to passe by the meanes of Satan, that almost all prayer, are directed to only Purgatorie, with this ungodly and pestilent opinion, whereby miserable men think that they shall be redeemed from thence, and obaine salvation by the workes of men. Whereby the riches of Baptisme

risme and faith are had in no reputation, and they at the last of Christians become Heathens. O most pernicious abomination. Christians should be taught as Christ and *Paul* teach them, that after Baptisme and absolution from sinne they should so live, that they should be ready every houre to receive death, with desire looking for the revelation of salvation already received. Now by the opinion of Purgatorie they are made secure and slouthfull, so that they deferre the studie of godlynesse even to their death, and think by contrition and confession they shall amend all things, as though there were some sinnes remaining for which they must goe into Purgatorie, they hope that by masses for the departed, and other bequests that they are perswaded to make in their testaments or last willes, they shall be redeemed out of Purgatorie, but these miserable men are in these things utterly deceived, and shall at length try them so be farre otherwise. *By the washing of the new birth.* He setteth forth the grace of God given to us in Baptisme, with words very full of praise and commendation. He calleth Baptisme a washing, whereby not the feet and hands, but the whole man is at once washed, purified and saved, so that to the summe and inheritance of salvation there is need of nothing but only faith in this grace of God, that it may remaine and be acknowledged the worke or grace alone, that we are saved without all our workes and merits, and so also there may remaine in us pure love, praise, giving of thanks, and glorie of the divine mercie, without all, glorie and pleasing of our selves in our own strength and endeavour, as it hath ben already said often and at large. Humaine righteousness is also a washing, but not whereby the whole man is so washed, but that Pharisaeall washing, whereby only the apparrell and vessels which are outward, are made cleane, whereof it is spoken Math. 23. Whereby it cometh to passe that men seeme unto themselves pure, but inwardly nevertheless they remaine full of filthinesse. Therefore he called Baptisme not a corporall or outward washing, but the washing of regeneration or new birth by which not those things that are outward, are washed and only the outward man made cleane, but the whole nature of man is altered and changed into an other nature, that is, the carnall nature is thereby destroyed, with all the inheritance of sinnes and perdition. Whereby he againe witnesseth, that our salvation is given us at once, so that it is not to be gotten by workes. For not one or two members are wont to be borne, as the hands or feet, but the whole man, which cannot worke this that he may be borne a man, but is first borne that he may worke: Likewise our workes doe not purifie or save us, but when as before we are pure, justified, and saved, we worke freely those things, which may be profit to our neighbour, and honour to God. And this is the simple and pure knowledge of the divine grace, whereby a man learneth to know both God and himselfe: to praise God alone, to humble

ble and cast down himselfe : to trust in God, to dispaire of himselfe. This doctrine of salvation they marvelously hinder, which urge men with lawes, precepts, and workes, and teach them to seeke thereby to be saved. *And the renewing,* That this washing and new birth may be more fully understood, he hath added, *the renewing,* that thou mayest understand, that he that is truly baptized, is become a new man, and a new creature, endued with a new disposition, which now is farre otherwise affected, loveth, liveth, speaketh and doth farre otherwise, then he was wont or could before. So the Apostle saith, Gal. 6. *In Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision,* that is, no workes of the law are of any value or importance, *but a new creature.* As if hee should say: Salvation cannot be perfected by joyning together certaine good workes, but the whole man must be at once renewed, and his nature changed, whereupon true good workes will follow of themselves, not by peicemeale, but together with great plenty. Of this new birth, whereby the whole man is renewed, Christ speaketh. Iohn 3. *He that is not borne againe, cannot see the Kingdome of God.* Here againe it manifestly appeareth, that nothing is here done by our workes, but that it becometh, that man, how great soever he be, must die, and be changed into another, which is done in baptism, if we beleve. The condemned also shall be borne againe in the last day, but they shall not be renewed, they shall remaine uncleane, as they were here, and as they were borne of Adam. Therefore that he might speake rightly of Baptisme, he calleth it the washing of the new birth, whereby they that are borne againe are also renewed. Of this new birth many things are to be found here and there in the Scripture, because of which God calleth his word and Gospel a wombe and matrix, as Esay 46. *Hearken all ye that remaine of the house of Israel, whom I have borne in my wombe, as mothers are wont to speake of their children.* He therefore that beleeveth the Gospel, is as it were conceived in the wombe of God, and from thence borne a new man, and like unto God : Whereof we will in another place speak more. Now it shall be sufficient, to have learned by these words, how our workes are nothing in fulfilling the commandements of God, and that it is a mad thing to attribute here never so little to our own strength, seeing that it is faith alone, whereby man is at once borne againe, and renewed. Wherefore understand this, that good workes must follow a new creature, but to attaine unto righteousness, and that new creature they are able to helpe nothing at all. No otherwise is the grace of God wont to renew man, then as if God should turne some drie and withered block into a new, green, and flourishing tree, which may afterward bring forth fruit plentifully. For the grace of God is a great, strong, vertue mightie, and marvelous effectual thing, it lyeth not in the mind, as the Schoolmen dreamed ; it sleepeth not, or is borne, as a painted table beareth

beareth a picture: it selfe beareth, guideth, urgeth, draweth, changeth and worketh all things in men, so, that every one may feele and have experience of it. It selfe indeed is hid, but the workes of it cannot be hid, but do witness of it, as the leaves and fruits doe of the tree, of what nature it is. Wherefore the Schoolmen *Thomas* and *Scotus* doe ungodly detract from it, who attribute no more unto it, then that it doth adorne the workes of nature, and is a helpe that they be brought to perfection, For it doth not adorne or helpe only, but it alone worketh those things that be good, neither doth it worke them only, but doth rather change and renew the person. For it exhibiteth the washing of the new birth, and of renewing, not of workes only, but much rather of the whole man. He that shall preach these things of grace, shall truly and fully commend it. Which *Paul* endeoured to doe when he said: *He hath saved us by the washing of the new birth, and renewing of the holy Ghost.* Nothing can be done here by joyning of workes together, the nature must needes be changed, whereupon it cometh to passe, that they that truly beleve must suffer many things: for grace worketh in them, and declareth it selfe present. Hereunto pertaineth that saying of the 111, *Psal.* *The workes of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.* What are these workes? We are they, by grace in Baptisme made the great, new, and regenerate workes of God. Is it not a great thing for a man by and by to be saved, and delivered from sinnes, death, and hell? therefore he saith sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. For by this new birth God hath found out, and done whatsoever men can desire. For what else doe men cover and desire, but to obtaine saluation, to be delivered from sinne, death, and hell?

*Of the holy Ghost.* Lastly, that he may the more expresse the greatnesse and vertue of grace, he attributeth this washing of the new birth, and renewing to the holy Ghost. For this washing, is so great, and of so weightie importance, that no creature but the holy Ghost alone is able to performe it. But how much, most excellent *Paul*, dost thou condemn free will, the great good workes of the proud holy ones, that is, the merits of hypocrites? In how high a place dost thou set our saluation, and againe, how dost thou bring it downe to us, and placest it neere us, yea even with us? how purely and sincerely dost thou set forth grace in these words? Wherefore worke whatsoever and how much soever thou wilt, it is impossible for a man to be renewed, and the person changed (without which no workes acceptable to God can be done) but by the washing of the new birth, and the renewing of the holy Ghost. That we may plainly see in those hypocritical counterfeits of workes. For thou shalt find none harder, none prouder, none so rash and hastie spirits, For they are broken, and not renewed, indurate, obstinate, confirmed by continuance, covering in deed, and some what adorning that old Adam  
by

doth not any whit appeare any change of nature in them, they continue stil in the oldnes of their corrupt flesh. O, what a pestilent people is this, & in how great indignation of God are they, when as in the meane time they think that they sit in Gods lap? Now whereas the Apostle attributeth this washing of the new birth, and renewing to the holy Ghost, he saith the same which Christ doth *Iohn 3.* where he saith: *Except a man be borne againe of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdome of God.* For that which Christ signified by Water, the Apostle calleth the washing, so both made mention of new birth, and of the holy Ghost. And we must marke that that which is spoken here: of the holy Ghost both by Christ, and the Apostle, must not be referred to that Papisticall confirmation, as they call it, for both of them referred to Baptisme, that which is here mentioned concerning the holy Ghost, who when the body is washed with water doth himselfe worke the new birth, and renewing by faith, which Christ called, to be borne againe of the spirit. We read in the Acts of the Apostles, that the Apostles did effusions lay their hands on them that were baptised, and that so the holy Ghost came upon them by a visible signe, which the Papists also snatch to their confirmation. But as that was done, that the beleevvers might by a visible signe be endued with the holy Ghost, to preach the Gospell in divers languages, so it continued only the time thereof, untill the doctrine of the Gospell was commended to the world by sufficient signes, wherefore it is now long since worne out of use: but that a certaine cerimonie hath come from thence even unto us, of laying hands on them, which are ordained Ministers or Preachers, which is now brought into an ungodly and pernicious use: but of these things in another place. *Which is shed on us abundantly.* See how notable the Apostle setteth forth grace, he saith not that the holy Ghost was given, but shed, and not that only, but shed abundantly. For he cannot sufficiently extole and magnifie grace, and the workes thereof, and we, alas, count it vile in respect of our workes. It were a dishonour to God and to his holy Spirit, if when he hath plentifully shed it upon us, there should as yet be something wanting, necessarie to righteousness and salvation, which we are able to performe, as though the workes of so incomparable grace could not be sufficient. And *Paul* surely might be reprov'd of lying, which had not spoken all things whereby we must be justified and saved, when he affirmeth that he doth it. But as he writeth, so it is: no man can attribute so great things to this washing and regeneration, no man can so much presume of them, but greater things may be attributed unto them, and thou oughtest to promise to thy selfe more things of them: no man shall beleve so great things, but he shall receive greater. Forasmuch as those good things which God hath given, are so great and so unspeakable, he would have them here come unto us being included and hid in his words and faith. For the nature of our  
present

sent life can not beare them being manifest, and therefore it must per-  
 ish, when they begin to be revealed, that man may by these inestimable  
 riches, which he now possesseth, by faith, be as it were swallowed  
 up, and vanish away. We are already abundantly justified by faith,  
 without all our own merit, therefore Christ saith *Ioh. 3. God so loved*  
*the world, that he hath given his only begotten Sonne, that whosoever be-*  
*leeueth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* Behold, they  
 that beleeve, have already everlasting life, and therefore undoubtedly  
 are justified and holy without all their own labour or meanes: that  
 thou mayest see, that nothing but grace and mercie is plentifully pow-  
 ered upon us, and that our workes could auail nothing hereunto. Thou  
 wilt perhaps say: Thou canst not preach sufficiently, that the grace and  
 mercie of God doth worke all things in us, and that no respect is to be  
 had of our workes, to the attaining of saluation, but how cometh it to  
 passe then, that the Scripture so often witnesseth that they shall be saved  
 which have wrought good workes? As *Ioh. 5. They shall come forth, that*  
*have done good, unto the resurrection of life, but they that have done euill*  
*unto the resurrection of condemnation.* And *Rom. 2. Honour and glorie to*  
*them that doe well, wrath and indignation to them that do ill.* We read ma-  
 ny sentences here and there in the Scripture like unto these. I answer:  
 As the words sound, so take them without all glosse, for it is even so,  
 they that doe well shall be saved, they that doe otherwise, shall be con-  
 demned. But herein many erre from the truth of the Scripture, in that  
 they judge workes according to the outward appearance, contrarie to  
 the Scripture, which teacheth that no man can doe good, who is not  
 himselfe good before, and by workes no man can become good, but  
 workes take their goodnesse of the worker, and he becometh good by the  
 washing of the new birth, and by nothing else. This Christ ment *Matth.*  
*7. saying: A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruite, neither a good*  
*tree euill fruite.* Wherefore make the tree either good or euill, and it  
 will bring forth like fruites. Hypocrites oftentimes doe workes like to the  
 workes of the Godly, yea some time having a goodlier shew, for they  
 diligently pray, fast, give almes, and pretend a marvelous holinesse, but  
 Christ calleth these sheepes clothing, wherewith most hurtfull wolves  
 are clothed and hidden. For none of them is of a true humble, meeke, and  
 bountifull heart, which they cheifly declare when they are rebuked,  
 when their holinesse is reprov'd: for then bring they forth their natu-  
 all fruites, whereby they are known. Those are, rash judgements, impa-  
 ciencie, stubbornnes, obstinacie, slander, and such like. It is true  
 therefore, he that doth well, shall be saved, that is, his saluation shall be  
 manifest, but he can do no good at all, if he be not before regenerate  
 by the washing of the new birth. For what good workes can one worke  
 in the oldnes of the flesh, and by the strength proceeded from Adam,  
 the y



they are the good workes which *Paul* here condemneth, saying: *Not by the workes of righteousness which we had done.* They are indeed good workes done in righteousness, but not before God, who first hath respect to the person, and then to the workes, as we read *Gen. 4.* that he had respect first to *Abel*, then to his sacrifice, as he first turneth himselfe from *Caine*, and then from his sacrifice, although according to the outward appearance it was as good a sacrifice and worke, as the sacrifice of *Abel*. *Through Iesus Christ our Saviour.* This he added that he may keepe us under the wings of Christ, as chickens are wont to be preserved under the wings of the hen: for thus Christ saith *Matth. 23.* *Ierusalem, Ierusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.* And hereby the nature of a true and right faith is taught. For it is nothing which some say I beleeve in God almightie, as the Iewes and many other are wont, and doe therefore receive corporall benefits of God. It is a true and lively faith, whereby thou beleevest in God, howbeit by Iesus Christ. First that thou doubt not that God is become a mercifull father unto thee, which hath pardoned all thy sinnes, and in Baptisme hath adopted thee for his sonne and heire, that thou mayest certainly know that thou art saved. Againe, thou must also know this, that that was not done freely, neither without satisfaction made to the divine justice. For there can be no place in thee for the divine grace and mercie to worke salvation, and to give thee eternall good things, unlesse the justice of God be before most fully satisfied. For Christ witnesseth *Matth. 5.* *One jot, or one tittle of the Law shall not escape, till all things be fulfilled.* That which is spoken of the grace and goodnesse of God, can not come but to them which doe most purely and exactly observe his commandements, according to that saying *Mich. 2.* When as the Iewes did presume of the goodnesse of God toward them, and did alwayes promise unto themselves peace, saying: How can God be alwayes angrie, is the spirit of the Lord shortened? It is answered them: Are not my words good unto him that walketh uprightly? Wherefore it shall be lawfull for none to attaine unto the abundance of grace, unless he hath before most exactly satisfied the commandements of God. Now it hath been spoken at large, that our workes are nothing before God, whereby we can not fulfill so much as the least commandement of God, how much lesse shall we be able so to satisfie the justice of God, that we may become worthy of his grace? Moreover, if we were able to fulfill all the commandements of God, and in all things to satisfie his justice, notwithstanding we had not as yet deserved grace and salvation, neither should he therefore owe it unto us, for that he may by the right of creation require as due service, all those things of us his creatures, created to live unto him. Wherefore it should yet come of grace and mercie, what- soever

soever should come from him to us. This Christ declared very well *Luke*  
*17.* speaking in a parrable: *Which of you having a servant plowing, or*  
*seeding, eattle, would say unto him by and by, when he were come from*  
*the field: Goe, and sit downe at the table; and would not rather say to*  
*him, dresse thyselfe with I may suppe, and gird thy selfe, and serve me, till*  
*I have eaten and drunken, and afterward eat thou and drink thou? Doubt*  
*not but that servant because he did that which was commanded unto*  
*him; I throw not. So likewise ye, when ye have done all those things which*  
*are commanded you, say: We are unprofitable servants: we have done that*  
*which was our dutie to doe.* Seeing then that heaven is given of grace,  
 and for no meritt, even unto those, if there were any such, which have  
 done all things that were commanded them, according to that promise?  
*If thou wilt enter into life, keepe the commandments: what shall we boast*  
*of our good workes, which although they were most absolute, yet should*  
*they be unworthy of heaven, but in as much as it is given us by the free*  
*and mercifull promise? Hereupon (for that we must so satisfie the di-*  
*vine justice, and yet notwithstanding our workes are not able to attaine*  
*thereunto, whereunto if they should attaine, yet should they deserve no*  
*grace or saluation, for that they are before due)* God first gave unto us  
 a mar, which should satisfie the divine justice, for us in all things. Again,  
 he hath by the same man bestowed this grace and bountifulnes upon us,  
 that albeit we without our own merit and worthinesse, yea having evill  
 deserved and being unworthy, receive grace, yet it cometh not unto us  
 altogether freely and without all merit, for we have it through the me-  
 rit and satisfaction of Christ. Whereupon *Paul saith Rom. 5. As by the*  
*offence of one, sinne came on all men to condemnation: so by the iustifying*  
*of one, that is, of Iesus Christ, the benefit abounded toward all men to the*  
*justification of life.* That is: As without all our merit, and own worke  
 we fell into sinne, being borne sinners, so againe without all our merit  
 and meanes, we are redeemed from sinnes, by the washing of the spirit  
 borne againe the sonnes of God, partakers of grace and saluation. And  
 this is the cause why the Apostle where he speaketh of faith and grace,  
 is wont to adde, by Iesus Christ: whereby surely he would give us to un-  
 derstand, that none should count it sufficient, if he say: I beleve in God,  
 Christ being neglected. He that truly beleeveth, must acknowledge, that  
 his faith can not be acceptable to God, yea that it can be no faith at all,  
 if all the commandements of God be not before fulfilled, which seeing  
 it is above thy abillitie, (and if it were not, yet notwithstanding thou  
 hadest performed nothing, but that thou oughtest, and hadest as yet me-  
 rited nothing, having fulfilled even all the commandements of God)  
 thou hast neede of another, which in all things may satisfie the divine  
 justice for thee, and may also merit heaven for thee. Now this other is  
 our Lord and Saviour Iesus Christ, who hath for thee fulfilled the whole

Law, and merited for thee, that God now according to his justice can not but give heaven unto thee, and in all things acknowledge thee for his sonne and heire. And this is a true and sound faith, which trusteth in God by Christ, and is certaine that by his merit it hath already received of God salvation, which shortly after shall be revealed with blessed abundance of felicitie. Neither can any other be called Christian faith, but that, whereby it is beleevd, that by Christ doe come unto us both satisfaction, which we owe to the justice of God, and the gift of salvation, which we our selves by no meanes, if the Law could even be fulfilled of us, can merit. Whereupon Paul Rom. 4. saith: *Christ was delivered to death for our finnes, and rose againe for our justification.* That is, by Christ we have received, not only remission of our finnes, but moreover also, that before God we are accounted righteous, and the sonnes of his grace. To the same effect also tendeth that which he saith Rom. 3. *Whom God hath set forth to be a reconciliation through faith in his blood.* Where againe we learne, that it is true faith, which trusteth in the blood of Christ, and beleeveth that thereby it shall obtaine grace. *Whereas that thou believest he hath shed his blood for thee, thou receivest satisfaction: in that thou acknowledgest him the reconciliation, thou confessest that by his merit the divine grace & salvation do come unto thee.* We have all things without our own merit and meanes, but not without the merit and meanes of Christ, who hath for this cause shed his blood. *Wherefore that we may allude unto the parrable of Christ, we must containe our selves under his wings, and not upon trust in our selves flee out and contend to come unto God, otherwise we shall be a pray to the hellish kite.* For as it hath been oftensaid, *our righteousness, our merites, yea and our faith shall prevaile nothing, without this our mediator Christ.* And therefore he saith John. 14 *No man cometh unto the Father but by me.* And in the whole Gospell what other thing doth he, but endeavour to take us out of our selves, and to transerre us to himselfe under his wings, that we may trust only in his satisfaction and merit? The same the Apost'e also teacheth in the words following. *That we being justified by his grace should be made heires according to the hope of eternall life.* He saith that we are justified, not by our own workes, but by the grace of the same Jesus Christ. That is, we are therefore justified, for that Christ hath the grace of the Father, having fulfilled his will in all things, and thereby merited eternall life. For seeing that he hath no neede of this merit, he giveth it unto us which doe beleve in him, that before God all his things may be imputed to us, and by them we may receive salvation. See, how rich a thing sound faith is, and how great good things it bringeth with it. See also how precious a thing the Gospel is, and how great a treasure it is to have it purely preached: and contrariwise, how great a discomoditie there is, where it is not preached, or not rightly preached, the inventions of men

men being mingled with it, or thrust in stead of it. Take heede therefore of such deceivers, and of their counterfet faith, rest not in thy selfe, but get thee under the wings of Christ, keepe thy selfe under his protection, trust that thou art heire of eternall life, not by thy own righteousnesse, or grace which thou hast received, but wherely he is righteous and acceptable before God. Hereunto pertaineth this saying *Psal. 91. He will cover thee under his wings, and thou shalt be safe under his feathers.* And in the song of Salomon it is said: *My spouse is a dove, building her nest in the caves of the rocks, and in the holes of the wall,* that is, in the wounds of Christ. And this indeed is a true Christian faith, which resteth not in it selfe as the Scholmen dreamed, but reposed it selfe wholly in Christ, and as it trusteth in him, so it resteth in him, having received eternall saluation. Whereas he saith that we are made heires of eternall life according to hope, beside that he proveth, that we without all our owne merits, by only hope of grace are borne againe heires of eternall life, and doe not become heires by working whereof, we have already spoken at large, he also teacheth this, that our saluation and eternall life is as yet hid, although, if we beleewe, we doe verily possesse it, and this body being put of, and the Kingdome of Christ revealed, all things shall appeare manifestly. [*The weapons of this text.*] This text fighteth most mightily, and with most plaine words against all righteousnesse and good workes of mans reason, and free will. For the words are plaine. *Not by the workes of righteousnesse; which we had done, but according to his mercie be saved us, by the washing, &c.* All which words doe utterly overthrow our righteousnesse, attributing all things to the washing of the new birth, and the renewing of the holy Ghost, to Christ and his grace. How can there notwithstanding any presumption as yet remaine in us? Wherefore let all sacred and prophane lawes have a faire shew: let all sacrificing Priests, Monkes, and Nunnes boast of themselves: let all religious and honest men and women seeme goodly in outward appearance: let them even raise the dead: if faith in Christ be absent, whereof we have now spoken so much, all these things are to no purpose. These most false shewes doe as yet deceive the whole world, and seduce almost every one. They make the Gospel obscure, and extinguish the faith of Christ: All their workes and orders, although they appeare goodly, and they think them to have merited never so much, doe availle no more unto saluation, then the workes of beasts, or of artificers, whereby they doe maintaine themselves and theirs, yea they doe most hurtfully hinder it. Therefore that I may conclude, take heede as much as thou art able, of these wolves, which under a faire pretence counterfet themselves sheep, and learne and accustome thy selfe with a sound faith to cleave unto Christ alone. ¶ *Sermon of D. Martin Luther, of the Kingdome of God.*

**F**Orasmuch as there is often mention, made in the new Testament of these words, the kingdome of heaven, the kingdome of God, the kingdome of Christ, and it is very profitable and expedient for a Christian to know these, to wit, that they are nothing else, but remission of sinnes, and grace preached and offered by the Gospell. For in this kingdome thou shalt find nothing but grace and goodnes, pardon and forgiveness of sinnes, love and gentlenesse: I therefore think it good to entreat somewhat at large of the state and kingdome, and of forgiveness of sinnes, The kingdome of God, whereby he reigneth over all the faithfull; and as a faithfull king defendeth, punisheth, rewardeth, guideth, and directeth them, &c. they againe from their heart trust in him, suffer his fatherly chastisement and correction with a patient minde, and alwayes serve him through obedience, is not worldly or temporall, but spiritual. Neither consisteth in meate and drink, or in any outward thing, but only in justification, quieting and consolation of the heart and conscience of man. Wherefore it is nothing else, but forgiveness and taking away of sinnes, by which consciences are defiled, troubled, and disquieted. For even as a worldly and temporall kingdome is ordained to this end, that men may live quietly and peaceably one with another: So the kingdome of God giveth these things spiritually, and destroyeth the kingdome of sinne, and is nothing else, but an abolishing and pardoning of offences, God reigneth in the hearts, inasmuch as he worketh in them by his word, peace quietnesse and consolation: even as sinne worketh the contrary, namely, unquietnesse, anguish, and all kind of evils. Herein God sheweth his majestie and grace in this life, that he taketh away and pardoneth mens sinnes: and this is the kingdome of grace. Now when as sinne with his guard, that is Satan, death, and hell, shall trouble man no more, then at the last the kingdome of glory, and absolute felicitie shall be. Hereupon it followeth: first, that the kingdome of God is ruled or governed by no law, no nor by the law of God, much lesse by the lawes of men, but only by the Gospell, and faith in God, by which hearts are purified, comforted and quieted, whiles that the holy Ghost powereth love and the knowledge of God into them, and maketh man as it were one thing and one spirit with God: so that his affection is set upon the same thing, he willeth and desireth the same thing, he seeketh and loveth the same thing that God doth: Neither standeth the case otherwise here, then it doth between two freinds, which beare good will one to another, and agree one with another in all things. Hereof it cometh, that a man in this kingdome of God is perfect, mercifull, pittifull and bountifull toward his neighbour, seeing that he knoweth by the instinct of the holy Ghost, that God is of the same affection toward him, and toward all men, and doth power forth his goodnesse plentifully. Such affection of God no man can know by the law, but only by the spirit,

rit, and word of the Gospell. None therefore shall obtaine quietnesse, comfort, and peace of the heart, or attaine unto the kingdome of God by any law. And they which prescribe many laws, do withdraw men from the kingdome of God to the kingdome of sinne, wherein is nothing else, but unquietnesse, anguish, affliction, adversitie, and all kind of evils tormenting the conscience. Like as on the contrary, in the kingdome and knowledge of God, there is meere joy, peace, and consolation of hearts.

Secondly : In this kingdome of God the Lord Christ reigneth no otherwise then as a Master of an Hospirall amongst the sick, poore, and diseased. For unto this kingdome none pertaineth, but sinnefull and miserable men, unto whom their sinnes are forgiven whereupon Christ saith in the Gospell Luke 6. *Woe be to you that are rich, which have received your consolation.* But contrariwise, the poore, miserable, and succourlesse receive comfort and joy by the Gospell: for Christ came to call sinners only, and not the righteous, that all glory may be referred to God alone, for that he forgiveth sinnes of his grace and meere mercie. Such abolishing or putting away of sinne, wherein Christ reigneth as a King of the kingdome of God, is done of him after two sorts: first thus, in that he remitteth, pardoneth and covereth sinnes, so that God will not regard, remember or revenge them although they be in a man. As it is in the 32. Psalm: *Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sinnes are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sinne, in whose spirit there is no guile.* And in Esay, chap. 43. God saith: *I am, even I am he, that for mine own selves sake doe away thine offences, and forget thy sinnes, so that I will never thinke upon them.* Secondly thus, in that he purgeth or rather scoureth sinnes by divers crosses and afflictions. For they are two things, to remit sinnes, and to weaken the body of sinne that it may not reigne in us. If a man beleeveth and is baptized, then all his sinnes are forgiven him. But afterward sinne must be scoured or abated by manifold affliction and mortification, as long as he shall live. Sinne sticketh in us, as long as the mortall body remaineth, but for Christs sake it is not imputed in the wrath of God, but freely remitted, and the force thereof diminished by his fatherly chastisement. In such chastisement for their amendment, true Christians have great comfort, peace, and joy, as Paul saith, Rom. 5. *Then being justified by faith, we have peace toward God, through our Lord Iesus Christ, by whom also through faith we have had this acceſſe into this grace, wherein we stand and reioyce under the hope of the glory of God.* Neither that only but also we reioyce in tribulations knowing that tribulation bringeth forth patience, and patience experience, and experience hope. And hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy Ghost which is given unto us. So thou hast two things to be considered: The first, that in this kingdome of God we are justified, The se-

cond, that by tribulation and affliction we are glorified, without which we cannot attaine to glory. Thirdly, good Christians are not known by this, when any suffer manifold tribulation and chastisement, that the body of sin may be weakned, and they brought to amendment. For herein they do altogether differ among themselves, one suffereth this, another one that is chased thus, another otherwise, so that even the very Apostles did not love and suffer alike: But they are known in forgiveness of sin, or justification by faith, wherein God turneth his anger from them, and receiveth them unto grace, and counteth them for his deare children, and imputeth no sinne to them to condemnation. Herein are all alike, even as all live under one heaven. Wherefore they doe most grossly erre and stumble, which measure Christians by manners, workes, and the outward manner of living, even as the Pharises were wont to doe, and did therefore find fault with Christ, for that he did not observe their ceremonies, but was a friend of Publicans and sinners. As that Pharisee said within himselfe, Luke 7. *If this man were a Prophet, he would surely have known who, and what manner of woman this is, which toucheth him: for shee is a sinner.* Here now an example of those things which are before said: A Physician which goeth about to cure the sick, doth first promise him health by the assistance and helpe of God, whereby he putteth him in great hope and comfort. Afterward he beginneth to purge, to cleanse and strengthen, and such like things which make to the recovering of health: So God also, when he hath remitted sinnes, and received man into the bosome of grace, doth lay on him all kind of affliction, and doth scour him, and renew him from day to day, in the knowledge and love of God, untill he become safe, pure and renewed, which then at the last commeth to passe, when this mortall body dyeth. Fourthly in these two partitions of the kingdome of God, two sorts of men are found, which abuse the same kingdome of the grace of God, and the Gospel. Some become sluggish and slothfull, saying: Well, if sinnes be pardoned freely of meere grace, and be washed away in baptisme, there is no need that I should add any thing of mine own. Others think contrariwise, that they shall put away their sinnes by workes, and so trusting to their own meritts, they are proud and arrogant, and in respect of themselves contemne others, which doe not so. The first of these contemne Gods grace: the others, appugne it, as not sufficient, and so they represent swine and dogges. Now all this appeareth by the Gospel, by which Christ reigneth in the kingdome of God. For some abuse it unto carnall libertie: others contrariwise are perswaded, that it is not sufficient to salvation, but that their workes also doe helpe somewhat, and by this they deny and contemne the grace of God. Hereof thou mayest read more in the Epistle to the Romans, wherein these two sorts of men are plainly set forth. Fifthly, this kingdome of God, or remission of sinnes hath no bound or measure

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as that place of the Gospell doth very well shew, where *Peter* asketh the Lord: *Lord how oft shall my brother sinne against me, and I shall forgive him? unto seven times?* *Iesus* said unto him, *I say not to thee, unto seven times, but unto seventy times seven times*, that is, as often as shall be needfull. After this followeth a parable, which the Lord there putteth forth, wherein he most severly admonisheth us, if we will not fall out of the favour of God, that we forgive our neighbour his offences without all delay or grudging, forasmuch as God alwayes forgiveth us innumerable sinnes. Our debt, whereby we are bound unto God, is ten thousand talents, that is, so unmeasurable and great, that we are not able to pay it with all our substance, all our strength and workes. For we can put away no one sinne, although it be even very little. Seeing therefore that God doth remit so many sinnes of his grace in his kingdome, it is meet that we should forgive our neighbour a few offences. Of this kingdome of God, wherein sinnes are forgiven, the Scripture every where maketh mention, and saith, that the kingdome and dominion of Christ doth extend from one end of the land to the other. So saith *David* *Psal. 72. His dominions shall be from the one sea to the other, and from the flood unto the end of the earth.* And a little after he saith: *All nations shall serve him.* This also the Angell *Gabriel* declared to the Virgin *Mary* *Luke 1.* where he saith thus of Christ: *The Lord shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reigne over the house of Iacob for ever, and of his kingdome shall be no end.* These and such like places do shew that the forgiveness of sinnes, wherein the kingdome of God doth especially consist, hath no measure or bound. Sixtly, hereof we may see, how unchristianly they doe, which bring forgiveness of sinnes to a certaine measure, as they doe, which measure out their indulgences for prescribed yeares, with forgiveness of the third, fourth, or halfe part. For hereby they bring the kingdome of God into a narrow and strait roome, and are injurious to his mercie, forasmuch as there is no end of his kingdome, nor measure of his mercie. But whosoever shall in faith call upon the name of God, shall be saved, as often as he doth it. Moreover when the sinner shall be sorry for his sinnes, the Lord will no more remember them, as it is in the Prophecie of *Ezekiel*, chap. 18. Seventhly, as this kingdome of God hath no measure or limits of forgiveness of sinnes, so also it hath no end, but endureth continually without ceasing: albeit the subjects of this kingdome doe not abide in it continually, firmly and faithfully, but doe often times forsake it. So the favour and grace of God were continually with *Peter*, although he denied the Lord, and revolted from him. To the same effectt tendeth the parable in the Gospell whereof we have now spoken. For the servant, which would not have pity of his fellow servant, did make himselfe unworthy of the mercy of God, did deprive himselfe of the kingdome of God, which consisteth in pardoning of offences



offences, as it is above mentioned. Here Vniuersities Diuines of a pregnant wit, as they seeme unto themselves, and puffed up with knowledge, have disputed; whether and how forgivenesse of sinnes doth come againe when man iterateth or renueth his sinne, nor knowing what they say. But follow thou the plaine and simple words of the Gospel, to wit, that thy sinnes are so often forgiven thee, as thou dost forgive thy brother, whom thou must so often forgive as he shall offend against thee. Wherefore in this parable, whereof I have even now made mention, Christ doth admonish us all, that we pardon and forgive all them that have offended us. As if he would say: As in mans affayres, he which is beneficiall to an other, hath others also beneficiall unto him againe, so saith Christ, in the kingdome of heaven, which consisteth specially in forgivenesse of sinnes, that is in Christianity or among Christians, he which pardoneth an other his offences, I also will pardon him his. And on the contrary, he that is not mercifull toward another, to him I also will deny grace. I am over you as a Lord and King, and ye are fellow servants and companions one with an other, Seeing therefore that I your Lord doe readily forgive you, you also ought more readily to forgive one an other. After the same sort also he hath commanded us to pray in the Lords prayer, *Matth. 6. Forgive us our debtes*: which he would not have done, if he did not promise and would not mercifully forgive us. But nevertheless he added a condition or signe to this promise, when he saith: *If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly father will also forgive you.* The first is a signe, the other a promise. Marke that it is here enjoined us, to forgive one an other his sinnes and offences, so, that we must be mercifull and bountifull toward our neighbours, if we will have the heavenly father gentle and appeased toward us. And let us be most certainly perswaded hereof, when we shall interpret at the best, and excuse as much as equity doth suffer, the offences and trespasses of other, although they be even great and grieuous, that we also shall have a bountifull and mercifull father towards us in heaven. Wherefore it is a thing most abhorring from Christianitie, and even blasphemous, when it is said: I can not, neither will I forgive him that which he hath committed against me. I will be revenged &c. Surely those blind men are ignorant, that they doe take from God his glory, to whom alone vengeance belongeth, and challeng it to themselves, and so they give up to the devill their own soules, which they have received of God, and ought to render them unto him againe, whereunto they are perhaps provoaked even with some small or trifling matter. Such kind of men as these ought to set before the eyes of their heart, these words of the Gospel, *Matth. 18. O Evil servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou praydest me: oughtest thou also to have had pity on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee? So his Lord was wrath, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he*

he should pay all that was due to him: So likewise shall mine heavenly father doe unto you, except ye forgive from your hearts each one to his brother their trespasses. Neither is it sufficient, if in gestures, signes, mouth or tongue thou shew thy selfe a friend unto him, and forgive him, but thou must doe it from thy heart, otherwise God will not forgive thee, yea thou shalt be driven out of the kingdome of grace. Wherefore if at any time we have tryed the mercy of God towards us, we must also readily pardon our fellow brethren, which have offendd us. For in that respect the mercifull father forgiveth us our sinnes, that we also should forgive our brethren, and shew mercy towards them, even as he is mercifull towards us and remitteth sinne, death, the fault and the punishment. When we shall doe this then are we received into the kingdom of God. For the goodnesse of God liveth in our hearts, and maketh us also good, Chirst sitteth at the right hand of the father, yet neverthelesse he reigneth in the hearts and consciences of the faithfull, so that they love, feare, reverence, and diligently obey him, no otherwise then obedient subiects doe their King, and in all their doings are made like to him, even as he himselfe saith, Mat 5. *Be yee perfect as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.* Now God is perfect in this, that he taketh away and pardoneth our wickednesse, defect, sinne, and imperfection, that we also may doe the like to our brethren. But when as we shall not do the like, we are driven out of this kingdom, and are made subiect to the kingdome of sin, death, and the divell, as disloyall and disobedient inhabitants of some country, are thrust out. Which God of his mercy turne from us, Amen.

[ All these things may be comprehended in the principall points following.] 1. *Christ reigneth: when by faith of the Gospel, he worketh the goodnesse and grace of God in our hearts, and maketh them like unto God.*

2. *In such a kingdome the conscience enjoyeth peace, consolation and rest, when it understandeth and knoweth that God is mercifull unto it, and imputeth not sinnes.* 3. *Therefore man beareth all kind of tribulation and affliction, by which sinne is scourged, and the force thereof abated. He also endeavoureth to be beneficiall unto other, as he himselfe hath been as it were overwhelmed of the benefits of God.* 4. *And so the Lord reigneth after two sorts: First, for that he maketh the faithfull certaine of the grace of God, and remission of sinnes. Secondly, for that he layeth the crosse upon them, that the body of sinne may be weakned, and they brought to amendment.* 5. *He that forgiveth his debtors pertaineth to the kingdome of God, but he that doth not forgive them, remaineth under the kingdome of sinne.* These things I thought good to speake in this present place concerning the kingdome of heaven, the kingdome of God, or the kingdome of Chirst, which is the same: to wit, that it is nothing else but a kingdome, in which thou shalt find nothing but forgiveness of sinners.

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Which kingdome is preached and offered unto us by the Gospel, God grant that we may so receive it. Amen. **The 12. Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther of Prayer,**

**T**hat prayer may be good indeed, and may also be heard, we must first consider that two things are necessary thereunto: one, that we first meditate upon the promise of God, and doe as it were advertise God thereof, and trusting unto it, be imboldned and made cheerfull to pray: for unlesse God had commanded us to pray, and had promised also that he will heare us, even all creatures could not obtaine so much as a grain by their petitions. Whereupon it followeth, that no man doth obtain any thing of God for his own worthines, or the worthines of his prayer, but by the only goodnesse of God, who preventing all our petitions and desires, provoketh us to pray and desire of him, by his gentle and bounteous promise and commandement, that we may learne how great care he hath over us, and is ready to give us more things, then we durst enterprise to aske, and that we may also learne to pray boldly, inas-much as he giveth us all things even in more ample manner then we doe aske them. It is necessary that we doe nowhilit doubt of the promise of the true and faithfull God, for therefore he hath promised that he will heare us, yea, and hath commanded us to pray, that we might have a sure and strong faith, that our prayer should be so heard, as he saith, *Mat. 21. and Marke 11. Whatsoever ye shall aske in prayer, if ye beleewe ye shall receive it.* And in *Luke chap. 11. And I say unto you, aske, and it shall be given you: seeke, and ye shall find: knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth: and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a sonne shall aske bread of any of you that is a father, will ye give him a stone? or if he aske a fish, will ye give him a serpent? or if he aske an egge, will ye give him a scorpion? If ye then which are evill, can give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Ghost to them that desire him?* We must boldly trust to these and such like promises and commandements, and pray with true confidence. If one so prayeth, that he doubt whether God heare him, and maketh his prayer only at adventure, caring not greatly whether he be heard or not heard: he committeth a double offence: One, for that he himselfe maketh his prayer frustrate, and laboureth in vaine. For so *Iames saith chap. 1. He that will aske of the Lord let him aske in faith and waver not: for he that waveth, is like a wave of the sea, tossed of the wind, and carried away, let not that man thinke that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.* Such a mans heart is not quiet and settled wherefore God can give him nothing. But faith maketh the heart quiet, and capable of the gifts of God. The other offence is, that he counteth the most faithfull and true God, as a lying, vaine and unconstant man, as he which neither is able, neither will

will fulfill his promises so by his doubtings he robbeth God of his honour, and name of, faithfulness, and truth. Whereby it is so grievously offended; that even that offence being committed, a Christian is plainly changed into a Heathen, and denyeth and looseth his true God, so that if he continue therein, he is damned for ever without all comfort: And if any thing be given unto him, which he asketh, it is given him not to good but to evill, as well temporall as eternall, not for his prayer sake, but from the wrath of God, that he may recompense those goodly words, which are uttered in sinnes, unbeliefe, and to the dishonour of God. Some say: I would trust indeed that my prayers should be heard, if I were worthy, or if I could pray well. Then, say I, if thou wilt not pray, before thou shalt know and find thy selfe fit to pray, that thou shalt never pray. For as it is before said, our prayer must not rest upon our worthynesse, or the worthynesse of it selfe, or be grounded thereon, but upon the immutable truth of the promise of God. If to be that it trust to it selfe or any other thing, and ground it selfe thereon, it is false and deceiveth thee, albeit thy heart should even be buist by reason of the ardent affection of godlinesse, and thou shouldest weep nothing but drops of blood. For therefore we pray, because we are unworthy to pray, and hereby surely we are made worthy to pray, and fit to be heard, inasmuch as we thinke that we are worthy, and doe boldly and cheerfully trust to the faithfulness and truth of God. Although thou be unworthy, yet have regard hereunto, and marke most diligently, that a thousand times more consisteth in this, that thou honour the truth of God, and not with thy doubtfulness accuse his faithfull promise of falshood. For thine own worthynesse doth not further thee, neither thy unworthynesse hinder thee: but infidelitie doth contemne thee, trust and confidence maketh thee worthy and preserveth thee. Wherefore so behave thy selfe all thy life long, that thou doe not at any time esteeme thy selfe either worthy or fit to pray or receive, unlesse thou find thy selfe to be such a one, as dareth enterprise the matter freely, trusting to the true and certaine promise of thy mercifull God, which will so shew both his mercy and goodness unto thee, that as he promised to heare thee being unworthy, and having not deserved it, of his meere grace, moved with no prayers: so he will heare thee being an unworthy asker, of his only grace, to the honour of his truth and promise, that so thou mayest give thanks, not to thine own worthynesse, but to his truth, whereby he hath fulfilled his promise, and to his mercy, whereby he hath made and set forth his promise. And this the 25. Psalm confirmeth, where David saith, *Gracious and righteous is the Lord, therefore will he teach sinners in the way. He will guide the meeke in judgement, and teach the humble his way. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, unto such as keep his covenant, and his testimonies.* Grace and mercy are in his promise, faith-  
fulness

faithfulnesse or truth in fulfilling and hearing. And in the 81. Psalm he saith: *Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other*, that is, they come together in every worke and gift, which we obtaine of the Lord by praying. In this trust and confidence thou must so behave thy selfe, that thou doe not limit to the Lord any bound or end, day or place, neither appoint any manner or measure of hearing, but that thou doe commit all those things to his divine will, wisdom and omnipotencie, that thou boldly and cheerefully looke to be heard, and yet not desire to know, how, and where, how soone, and how long, and by what meanes. For his divine wisdom, shall find a better manner and measure, time and place, then we can think, even although that should be done by miracles. Even as in the old Testament *Exod. 14.* when the children of Israel trusted that God would deliver them, and yet no possible meanes were before their eyes, or in all their thoughts, then the red sea opened it selfe, and gave them passage, drowning all their enemies at once. The holy woman *Judith*, when she heard that the Citizens of *Bethulia* would alter the face of five days give up the City, if God in the meane time did not helpe them, rebuked them saying; *What are ye, that ye tempt the Lord? these are not devices and purposes, whereby we obtaine mercy of God, but rather whereby we provoke him unto wrath and displeasure. Will ye set the mercy of the Lord a time, and appoint him a day after your will?* Hereupon God did helpe her after a marvelous sort, that at the last she slew *Holofernes*, and put the enemies to flight, *Jud. 13.* So Saint *Paul* also saith, *Eph. 3.* that the power of God is such and so great, that it doth far greater & better things then we either ask or think. Wherefore we ought to thinke our selves more vile, then that we may name, appoint, or prescribe the time, place, manner, measure, and other circumstances of that which we aske of God, but we must leave all things wholly unto him, constantly and boldly beleeving that he will heare us.

**The 13. Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, concerning the bidding of Guests to the great Supper.** *Luke 14. Verse 16. to the 24.* *A certaine man made a great supper, and bad many, &c.*

**A**S in the whole Scripture, so in this text also we must endeavour, that according to our abilitie (as ye have often times heard heretofore) we may understand the true and simple meaning, and thereupon settle our heart and conscience. For he that shall encounter with Satan, must not waver and stagger this way and that way, but must be certaine of his cause, and instructed with many places of Scripture, otherwise when the Divell shall by an uncertaine place of Scripture, draw him to his forke, he will toss him this way, and that way, as the wind doth a dry leafe. Wherefore out of this text we must gather a certaine meaning, whereby we may persist and stand sure. Howbeit it is not

not to be understood of the reverend Eucharist, or the bread of the Lords table, although our Papists have miserably rested in, as they have done many other authorities of Scripture. But this is the scope, this is the sum of this text: that the Gospel is preached and published through the whole world, but few receive and embrace it. And it is therefore here called a supper, for that the Gospel must be the last word, which shall continue to the end of the world. Wherefore the supper here is nothing else, but a very rich and sumptuous feast, which God hath made through Christ by the Gospel, which setteth before us great good things and rich treasures. And he sent his servant to bid men to this sumptuous supper, that is: The Apostles were altogether sent with one word into the whole world, that they might bid and call men to this supper, with one voice, with one Gospel, with one ambassage: after such sort, that if *S. Peter* had come and preached the Gospel of God in that place where *Paul* had preached it before, yet had it been one word, and the same preaching, that the hearers should have been compelled to say: Behold he preacheth the same that we heard before of the other, they wholly consent and agree, and the thing that they publish is all one. That the Evangelist might insinuate this consent and agreement in preaching, he saith: *He sent his servant*, he saith not, his servants, as of many. Now this message the servant must doe to the hidden guests: *Come for all things are now ready. For Christ hath suffered death, and in his death hath slain sin and death, also was risen again from death, the holy Ghost was given and briefly all things were prepared which pertained unto that great supper.* All things were without all our cost. For the father by Christ hath paid the price of all things, that without all our merit and labour we might enjoy his goodness, and be nourished and enriched. He sendeth his servant therefore first to the Jewes, to bid them to this great supper, unto whom the promise was made of God. For the law and all the Prophets were directed hereunto, that they might prepare the people of God. As the Angel *Gabriel* declared of *Iohn* the Baptist to his father *Zacharias* Luke 1. *He shall be filled with the holy Ghost even from his mothers womb, and many of the children of Israel shall be turned to their Lord God. For he shall go before him in the spirit of Elias, to turne the hearts of the fathers to their children: and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just men, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.* But what did the guests answer to the message of the servant? the text following declareth. *But they all with one mind began to make excuse.* This is that whereof the Lord speaketh, *Matth. 10.* *He that loveth father or mother more then me, is not worthy of me. And he that loveth sonne or daughter more then me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his crosse, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.* For he that will be partaker of this supper, must put all things into danger for the Gospel sake, body, goods, wife, friends

children, friends &c. Moreover he must leave all things whatsoever they be, that separate him from the Gospell, albeit they seeme good, just, right, and holy. Neither think ye that these men which here excuse themselves, were guilty of greivous sinnes, or occupied about unjust matters and workes. For it is not unjust to buy, to use trade of marchandize, to maintaine himselfe honestly, to marry a wife, to be joynd in matrimony. But therefore can they not come to this supper, for that they will not forsake these things, but will rather cleave to them in their heart. Now they must be utterly forsaken and left, when the Gospell so requireth. Thou wilt perhaps say: I would in deed willingly follow the Gospell, I would cleave unto it, and doe all other things whatsoever, but to forsake goods, houses, famelic, wife, children, &c. surely this is a hard matter. God hath commanded me to labour, to maintaine my wife and children, &c. Behold therefore this is the scope and sum, that the Gospell is the word of faith and offence, because of which every faithfull man doth bear offence willingly. Indeed God hath willed thee to doe these things, howbeit he hath also commanded, that thou preferre him before all creatures, and love him above all things, and thinke him higher then all things which thou canst know, even as the chiefe and greatest commandement giveth us to understand: *'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soule, with all thy mind,* Deut. 6. Wherefore thou must forsake all things before thou suffer thy selfe to be pluckt away from the love of him, or his word: although indeed he loseth nothing, which forsaketh any thing for the Gospels sake. If for the Gospels sake thou loose this temporall life, God will give thee another farre better, to wit, eternall life, as Christ saith, Mat. 10. *He that will find his life, shall loose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.* If thou be compelled to forsake thy wife together with thy children, remember that God hath a care of them, he will be a better father unto them then thy selfe, which undoubtedly commeth to passe, if so be thou beleeve. For we have very great and rich promises that he will not suffer his word to faile, but will alwayes fulfill it; if we can freely and confidently trust in him, and commit our selves wholly to him. Christ saith after this sort Mat. 19 *Whosoever shall forsake houses, or brethren, or sister, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my names sake, he shall receive an hundred fold more, and shall inherit everlasting life.* We have here his words & promise: what would we have more? or what can we desire more? wherein therefore doe we faile? only in our faith. Wherefore no man commeth to this supper, but he that bringeth with him a sincere faith, which God preferrieth and loveth above all creatures. But how doth the Lord recompense them which excused themselves that they could not come to the supper? the text it selfe declareth, *Then was the good man of the house angry and said to his*

his servant: *Goe out quickly into the streetes and lanes of the City, and bring in hither the poore, and the maymed, and the halt, and the blind.* To goe into the streetes and lanes is nothing else, but that whereas the Jewes made themselves unworthy of the Gospell, and did refuse it, the Disciples turned to the Gentiles. For it was enjoyned them of Christ, that they should not turne themselves to the Gentiles, nor preach the Kingdome of God in the Cities of the Samaritans, but should go onely to the sheepe of the house of Israel, and should feed them only, as they did. Now the Jewes striving against this word, & by no means receiving it, the Disciples sayd, *Act. 13: It was necessary that the word of God should first have bin spoken unto you: but seeing you put it from you and judge your selves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turne to the Gentiles: for so hath the Lord commanded us, saying: I have made thee a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be the salvation unto the end of the world.* But what meaneth that which he saith moreover to the servant? *Go into his wayes and bedges, and compell them to come in, that mine house may be filled.* This is to be understood of desperate and weak consciences, which also pertain unto this supper, and are compelled unto it, but this compulsion is not outward, but inward and spirituall, and is done after this sort. When the law is preached, sinne is set before our eyes and revealed, that a man may come to knowledge of himselfe, so that to compell to enter or come in, doth rightly signifie to drive sinne into the conscience, whereby a man may know that he is nothing, that all his workes are sinnes, and subject to damnation, and so suddenly his conscience may become desperate, and his heart faine and terrified, that all that confidence and opinion of help may depart, and man himselfe be able no where to comfort himselfe in any thing, and at the last be driven to despaire of himselfe. If so be that one be once after this sort compelled, then doe not long delay to let him come in, but deliver the man out of desperation. That seemeth to passe, when thou comfortest him by the Gospell, and declarest that he is delivered from his sinnes, saying: *believe in Christ, that he hath made thee free from thy sinnes, then shalt thou be delivered and free from sinne.* And this is the meaning of that which he saith: *Compell them to come in.* It is not to be understood of outward compulsion, as some interpret it, that wicked and ungodly ones should be violently driven to the supper, for this prevaileth nothing, neither is it so meant in this place. Wherefore it is to be referred only to the conscience, and is inward and spirituall. Now he goeth on to speake to the servant and the rest. *For I say unto you, that none of these men which were bidden, shall tast of my supper.* This is the conclusion, that they will think themselves most certain that they shall come to the supper, and tast of it, shall not tast of it. The reason ye have heard. Now briefly the guests that are bidden and doe not come,



are they, which thinke that they shall obaine the supper by their owne workes, very much wearying themselves, thinking assuredly, that they shall tast of it. But the Lord mightely concludeth and saith: Not one of these men shall tast of my supper. Wherefore most gentle Lord? They have committed no wicked thing, neither have been occupied about unjust matters. Behold, this is the reason, for that they have forsaken faith, and have not confessed it freely before every one, neither have preferred that rich and sumptuous supper before all creatures. For seeing it is sumptuous, it requireth those men that doe judge it to be so, and doe put any thing in danger, whatsoever it be, that they may be partakers of it. Thus ye have the compendious meaning of this text, which I have only briefly runne over, if any will expound it more at large, I am well content he so doe. **The 14. Sermon of D. Martin Luther, of the moethes of charitie.** [Luke 6. Verse 36. to the 42.]

**T**He workes of charity which we must doe to our neyghbours in temporall things and in corporall necessitie, are described unto us in this text: which the Lord then declared, when he said a little before in the same chapter, *that we must doe well unto our enemies, and bestow benefits upon them which hate us: that we must blesse them that curse us: that we must pray for them which persecute us: if any man smite us on the one cheek, we must offer unto him also the other: and if any man take away our cloke, we must not forbid him to take away our coat also. &c.* All which he comprehending in a brieve summe, saith: *Be ye mercifull, as your Father also is mercifull.* Here ye see all good workes summarily described which we must exercise among our selves, as our heavenly father hath exercised them toward us. Ye have often times heard, that it is not needfull to doe good workes toward God but toward our neyghbours only. God can be made neither stronger nor richer by our workes: but man may be strengthened and enriched by them, unto whom also they are necessarie, unto whom only they are to be directed, and not unto God, which ye have very often heard, and which is now in your wares: but would to God it would at the last burst forth both into your hands and workes. Marke therefore how perverse an order it is, when a man deale with God by workes, with whom notwithstanding they must deale by only faith, and when faith is directed unto man, whereas it is to be placed in God alone. Turne these contrariwise, and they shall be right, after this sort: let us first repose faith in God alone, and let us then give our selves to serve our neyghbours, and to direct all our workes so, that they may turne to their commoditie. We must deale before God by no other thing but by faith alone, because none is able to help us but God only, and whatsoever we possesse either in mind or body, that cometh wholly to us from God alone, in whom we ought to trust, upon whom we ought to set our heart. Now some use such a preposterous order, that they

they repose faith, which ought to have respect to God only, in themselves and others, they rest upon their traditions, and whatsoever their great masters have invented, in that they put their trust. Of such God saith in *Ieremie* 2 *Ier.* 2. *My people have done two evils: one, for that they have forsaken me the well of the water of life, and digged to them pits, yea vile and broken pits that can hold no water. Another, for that thou darrest say: I am without sinne and gillelesse, thus, his wrath cannot come upon me: behold I will reason with thee, because thou darrest say, I have not offended.* First he saith, that his spouse is turned into an harlot, and hath estranged her selfe from God the fountaine of life, from whom life salvation and every good thing floweth, him they have forsaken. Secondly they set up their own traditions, and digge unto themselves a fountaine of their own, which can hold no water. So our Papistes trust to their own inventions, to their founding of Masses, to their fastings, prayers, and such like things. Which appeare to be as a fountaine, out of which they would draw life, and blessednesse or salvation, when as notwithstanding it is able to hold no water: they forsake God the fountaine of life. Afterward he saith: they dare rise against me, that I should not be angry with them, alledging that their workes be just, and they will goe to law with me. Behold this is another sinne, that they goe about to defend their workes. Whereupon God also saith. *I will contend with thee in judgement, and will shew how thou gaddest hither and thither to change thy wayes.* So faith pertaineth to God alone, wherunto it belongeth to obtain all whatsoever things are necessarie, as well temporall things as eternall, and so to obtaine them, that it think not that it hath merited in any thing. Also it must againe apply it selfe downward toward our neighbour, without looking for any recompense, not that blessednesse consisteth in that deriving of faith, to wit charity, for neither doth God require that, who will have the conscience to rest only in him: even as the spouse must cleave only to her husband and to no other: so also God requireth of us that we trust in him alone. These things Christ declareth when he saith, *Be ye mercifull as your Father is mercifull.* Wherefore I must so order my conscience toward God, that I undoubtedly beleve, that I have him a bountifull & mercifull father, as I will afterward declare, and that I also doe shew mercy toward my neighbour. Which faith must be inward, and carried upward unto God, but workes must be without, and derived downward to our neighbour. After this sort *Abraham* did, when at the mountaine in the Country of *Moria* he ascended to God, he left his servants and asses below at the bottom of the mountaine, taking only *Isack* with him. The same must be done of us if we will ascend unto God, that we may come to him with *Isaac* onely, that is, with faith: servants and asses; that is workes are to be left below, Thus much for the entrance of this text concerning faith and

worker, to wit that faith must pierce inward and upward, but worker must goe without and downward, whereby at the length it cometh to passe, that we are righteous before God and men, for that we give due honour unto God, and beleve according to his word, and satisfie our neighbour in the dutie of love. Now let us see the very wordes of the text in order. *Be ye mercifull as your Father is mercifull.* How therefore is our heavenly father mercifull? after that sort, that he giveth us all good things, corporall and spiritual, transitorie and eternall, freely and of his mercy. For if he should give unto us according to our desert, he should give unto us nothing but hell fire and eternall damnation. Whatsoever therefore good things he bestoweth upon us, he bestoweth them of his meeke mercy. He seeth us sick fast in death, therefore he hath mercy upon us and giveth us life: he seeth us to be the children of bell, therefore he taking pity upon us, giveth unto us heaven: He seeth us to be miserable and naked, hungry and thirsty, it pittying him hereof, he clotheth us, and refretheth us with meat and drinke, and maketh us full of all good things: So whatsoever we have either in body or in spirit, he giveth it us of his meeke mercy, without any merit or desert of ours. Whereupon Christ here saith: Imitate your father, and be ye mercifull like unto him. This is not simple mercy, such as reason teacheth, for that is greedy of her own commoditie, which giveth onely to great and learned men, and to them that deserve it: it loveth them that be faire and beautifull: it giveth unto them, of whom it looketh for profit and commoditie againe, which is a mercy divided, begging, and as it were torne and broken in peeces. For if I shall give to him that hath deserved, or if I shall regard fairnesse or friendship, it is a bargaine or debt, and not mercy. Hereof Christ speaketh in the same chapter before this text in this wise *Luc. 6. If ye love them which love you, what thank shall ye have? and if ye doe good for them which doe good for you, what thank shall ye have? for even the sinners doe the same: and if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thanks shall ye have? for even the sinners lend to sinners to receive the like.* But the mercie of Christians must not seeke her own, but so behave it selfe, that it be indifferent, that it regard all alike with open eyes, both friends and foes, even as our heavenly father doth. And wheresoever this mercie is not, neither is there faith also. For thy heart being settled in faith, so that thou knowest God to have shewed himselfe thy God, so gentle and bountifull, without thy desert and of meer grace when thou wast as yet his enemy, and the child of everlasting malediction, thy heart I say being settled in this faith, thou canst not contain thy selfe, but that thou shew thy selfe againe so to thy neighbour, and that wholly for the love of God, and for thy neighbours commodities sake. Take heed therefore what difference thou make between a friend and enemy, between the worthy and unworthy: for ye see all which are

In this text rehearsed, to have otherwise deserved of us, then that wee should haue them, or doe well unto them. And the same thing the Lord meaneth when he saith Luke 6. *But love your enemies, doe well unto them, lend, looking for nothing againe, and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the most High: for he is kind unto the unkind and to the evill.* But how cometh it to passe, that a certaine contrary thing to that which we have taught seemeth to appeare in this text, where he saith? *Be ye mercifull as your heavenly father is mercifull:* againe, *Judge not, and ye shall not be iudged: condemne not, and ye shall not be condemned: for give and it shall be forgiven you.* All which authorities sound so, that we must deale before God with our workes, and by them deserve the mercie of God, when as notwithstanding ye have very often heard, that faith alone doth all? and both Paul and the whole Scripture doe commonly say and affirme, that we must beleieve in God alone, and deale by only meere faith before him. It is requisite here to understand that good workes are only a setting forth and commendation of faith, so that if I beleieve, I must be mercifull, I must not iudge nor condemne my neighbour, I must forgive, and give unto my neighbour. Whereof set an example before your selves. Gen. 22. What did Abraham being commanded to offer his sonne? he obeyed the commandement, and drew forth the sword to kill his sonne: what ensued thereupon? the Angell of the Lord stried him, saying: lay not thy hand upon the child, neither doe any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, for as much as for my sake thou hast not spared thine only sonne. Howbeit this is here to be known and marked of us, that we must first receive, before we give: before we shew mercy, we must receive mercy of God: we doe not lay the first stone, neither doth the sheepe seeke the shepheard, but the shepheard the sheepe. Wherefore so bestow thy workes in every respect, that thou looke for nothing at Gods hands because of them: for we obtaine even every thing of God without merit or desert: so God saith Esay 6. 7. *I am found of them that seeke not for me, I have appeared to them that aske not for me.* And in the end of the same chapter: *The time shall come (saith God) that ere ever they call, I will answer them, and while they are yet but thinking how to speake, I will heare them.* For indeed before we seeke him, he findeth us, before we aske him, he heareth us. Likewise St. Paul saith Rom. 3. *There is no difference: for all have sinned and are deprived of the glorie of God, and are iustified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Iesus: whom God hath set forth to be a reconciliation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, in that he forgiveth the sinnes that are past, through the patience of God, to shew at this time his righteousness, that he might be iust, and a iustifier of him that is of the faith of Iesus.* And in the chapter following he saith: *Now to him that worketh the*

wages is not counted by favour but by debt: but to him that worketh not, but beleeueth in him that iustifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. For if it be of grace, it is no more of workes, or else were grace no more grace, as he saith afterward in the eleventh chapter. Againe, I must bestow my workes so, that they may be a certaine signe, and as it were a scale graven with letters, whereby I may be assured that my faith is sincere. For if I feele in my heart, that my worke proceedeth from love, I am sure concerning the integritie and soundnesse of my faith, if I forgive, the same forgiveness doth assure me concerning the sinceritie of my faith, doth declare my faith, and certifie me, that God hath also pardoned my sinne, and doth daily more and more pardon me. So it fell out with *Abraham*, his worke made his faith known unto him. God indeed knew that he did beleeve, but it behoved that *Abraham* also should know, and shew forth his faith. Wherefore workes following only freely as fruits of faith, are declarations of such a faith. For what should it profit me, if I had even a strong faith, but unknowne unto me? even as if I should have a chest full of gold, yet I being ignorant thereof, should take no commodity thereby. But if any would shew it unto me, he should doe me as great a pleasure, as if he gave it me. So if I have faith and yet be ignorant thereof, it is no profit unto me. Wherefore it must burst forth, and be shewed by the workes that ensue, which are both signes and scales of the present faith. So Saint *Peter* meaneth, when speaking of the workes of charitie, and the vertues of faith, he concludeth thus: *Wherefore brethren, give rather diligence to make your calling and election sure, which if you doe, yee shall not fall. For by this meanes an entering shall be ministred unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord & Saviour Iesus Christ.* 2 Pet. 1. 8, 9. He saith not do good workes, that by them ye may be called, but that ye may assure your selves of your calling. Accustom your selves therefore wel unto the phrases & manner of speaking used in the Scripture, that ye run not upon them like blind moules, and confirme workes in such places as this: for herein workes are to be rejected if we think, that we are justified by them: but herein they are extolled and commended, in that they are profitable to our neighbour and fruits and signes of faith. Behold, it was meet that I should make this digression, least I should confirme the meaning of the Papists. Now if it should be demanded why God oftentimes setteth down such contrary sentence, and disagreeing one with another, as it seemeth to us and our reasons I answer, that he may exercise us in reading, and that we should not thinke that we understand the whole scripture, when we scarce understand one place. Some sayings doe guide the spirit, how we ought to behave our selves toward God, only by faith, as this: *We are iustified freely:* Rom 3. 24. againe lest the body should be sluggish outwardly, there are sentences also

also set forth unto us, which doe guide and exercise the body, as these which we have heard here recited: *Forgive, and yee shall be forgiven*, also where as Christ affirmeth that he will require workes in the last day, and will say after this sort to the condemned, *Matth. 25. I was an hungred, and yee gave me no meat: I thirsted, and ye gave me no drinke. I was a stranger, and ye took me not in unto you: I was naked and yee clothed me not, &c.* Which sentences, while ignorant and light spirits labour to wrest and apply to workes, they see not how great evill they commit. But spirituall men referre them to the very body only, they themselves standing naked before God in spirit, which is both just and necessarie. For there are two things in man, the Spirit and the Flesh. Hereupon there are some places which doe guide only faith in the spirit: some which doe direct only workes in the body: for one place cannot direct both the body and the spirit together. We must so doe with our substance, that we be willing to part from it, to lend, and to give to our neighbour, when it shall be requisite. And if we see any not to have, wherewith to make restitution, we must release him, and forgive the debt according to the example of *Nebemiah*, as we read in *Esdas* 1. 5. For God hath given many things unto us, who is able to give us more things also if we beleeve. And thus we heare that if we will be Christians, we ought to lend, give, and to be willing to part from that which we have, otherwise we shall not shew the fruits of a lively faith. Wherefore lay up this text inwardly in your minds, that yee deale by no other thing before God, but by only faith, and referre and bestow your workes to the only service and profit of your neighbour. Thus much shall suffice to have been spoken concerning the former part. Now what is to be said moreover of this text, or what doth follow we will afterward consider. In the words following the Lord interpreteth himselfe, what kind of mercy he understandeth, saying after this sort: *Judge not, and yee shall not be judged: condemne not, and yee shall not be condemned: forgive, and yee shall be forgiven: give and it shall be given you.* In this place the Lord divideth mercy into three parts, that we may not be ignorant, what manner of mercy that ought to be, which it becometh us to shew to our neighbours. First judgement and condemnation is taken from us. Then thou must forgive thy neighbour if he hath committed any thing against thee. Lastly thou must helpe the needy. These things this word (*Mercy*) signifieth, wheresoever it cometh in the Scriptures. And all these must proceed from a sincere heart, all colouring and flatterie being taken away, that there be no respect had of the person. For if thou desire to wish well and to wish well to them, which wish well to thee: or to hurt them, which hurt thee, thou art utterly deceived. But thou must do so, as Christ saith a little before: *Imitate thy heavenly father, love thine enemy: doe well to him, which do evill to thee: forgive him*

that hurteeth thee : lend to the needy, and so of the rest. That therefore we may speak of the former part, that we must not iudge or condemne, we must make, that God hath ordained the sword of the Magistrate, to the punishing of publique offences, so that it be provided, that it be not done against the precept and commandement of God, as that the innocent be not executed : For whereas the Iudge dealeth unjustly, he is as well an homicide as another, of which judgement Christ saith nothing here. Else where he maketh mention thereof, when as he said to him, which desired that he would bid his brother divide the inheritance with him : Luke 12, 14. *Who made me a iudge or a divider over you?* For the care and governing of outward things doe not belong to the kingdome of Christ. But Christ speaketh here of another judgement, namely of that whereby one reputeth and counteth another good or evill, when as notwithstanding he seeth no good or evill to be done of him. Which judgement belongeth only unto God. For it may be, that thou see thy brother offend to day, whom notwithstanding to morrow God doth receive, then may he both be, and also seeme unto thee to be good, neither must thou remember his sinnes, for that Christ hath forbidden. For there cannot be either any love or concord, where this iudgement and condemnation is usuall amongst men: To iudge and condemne another is nothing else, then to have a beame in his owne eye, which all hypocrites doe without doubt beare in their eyes. For they that iudge themselves good, are offended at their brother, whatsoever others doe, it displeaseth them, forasmuch as they will not acknowledge their own signe. But it cometh to passe, that when thou seest many sinnes in others, thou seest not the beame that is in thine own eye, and so fallest into the judgement of God. Hereof it cometh, that thou which judgest another, art made worse then the most wicked bauder, or the most unchaste harlot, before God, who alone knoweth who is to be saved, and who to be condemned. Such hypocrites are of that nature that it is a pleasure unto them, and they take no small delight thereof, if they reason and talk either of the adulterie or fault of another man, yea they increase a small thing or trifle in their neighbour, and whatsoever others do, they interpret it at the worst, so that no man is able to do that, which pleaseth or liketh them. And although they themselves do not such things, yet they willingly hear that other men do them, whereas a godly man helpeth as much as he is able, that these things may be covered and amended. But it many times falleth out, that they are most filthy adulterers even according to the flesh, which do so iudge and condemn others, howbeit they do not iudge man only, but even God himself. Wherefore if thy brother be a sinner, conceale his sin, and pray for him to the Lord: if thou reveal his sin and rejoyce thereat, surely thou art not the child of the mercifull father, for if thou were, thou wouldest be mercifull



isfull according as he is. This is a thing most certain, that we are not able to shew so great mercy to our neighbour, as God both hath and doth shew to us. But that is the practice of Satán, that we do those things which are quite contrary unto mercie, which is an undoubted sign, that there is no mercy at all in us. Of these judgers of others Christ speaketh in the Gospel, when he saith: Lu. 6. 39. *Can t he blind lead the blind? shall t hy not both fall into the ditch? The discip le is not above his master: but who so ever will be a perfect discip le, shall be as his master. And why see st t hou a mote in t hy brothers eye, & consider est not the beame, that is in thine own eye? either how can st thou say to t hy brother, Brother, let me pull out t he mote that is in thine eye, when thou see st not the beame that is in thine own eye? Hypocrite, cast out the beame that is in thine own eye first, and then shalt thou see perfectly to pull out the mote that is in t hy brothers eye.* As if he said: thou thinkest that thy brother is blind, and in thy mind doest find fault with another, that is, thou wilt guide another when notwithstanding thou thy self art blind. Thou judgest him a sinner, and thy self an honest and just man. What other thing is this, then for thy heart to be so affected, that thou count thy self better? Which is nothing else, then that thou wilt lead and guide others, when thou thy self art blinder then a moule, so that he which followeth thee, doth fall with thee into the ditch. Of such as judge themselves to excell others, & think themselves to be followed more then the word of God, Sr. Paul speaketh, Rom 2. Behold (saith he) thou art called a Jew, & restest in the law, & gloriest in God, & knowest his will, and tryest the things that descend from it, in that thou art iustified by the law, & persuadest thy self, that thou art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darknes, as instructer of them, th t lack discretion, a teacher of the unlearned, which hast the form of knowledge, & of the truth in the law. Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thy self? thou that preachest a man should not swear, dost thou swear? thou that sayest a man should not commit adulterie, dost thou commit adulterie? thou that abhorrest idols, committest thou several things? thou that gloriest in the law, through breaking the law, dishonorest thou God? Whereupon he also saith in the beginning of the same chapter to hypocrites: Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, who so ever thou art, that condemnest: for in that thou condemnest another, thou condemnest thy self: for thou that condemnest doest the same things. But we know that the iudgement of God is according to truth, against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O thou man that condemnest them that do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the iudgement of God? Lo, this is to speak the truth to hypocrites, who go about to shew the way to others, which they themselves know not, leading so other men into the ditch with them. Therefore the Lord saith: The discip le is not above his master, but who so ever will be a perfect discip le, shall be as his master. This is a common proverb: I can learne no more of



of my master then he knoweth himselfe. Wherefore doth the Lord speak this proverbe? because of two sorts of masters: the one is blind, whom if I shall follow, I a' for my selfe shall become blind; he himselfe falleth into the ditch, and I follow. The other master is the mercifull father, of whom we must learne mercy: whom if we follow, we also doe become mercifull like as he is: if we were mercifull daily, we should also become perfect, as he is perfect, but that commeth not to passe, as long as we are in this life. The second part of mercy is, that we forgive them which have endamaged us, or hurt us by any meanes. A Christian can never be so hurt, but he ought to forgive, not only seaven times, but seaventy times seaven times, as the Lord saith unto Peter, *Mat. 18. 35.* Wherefore God forgiveth a Christian his sinne or infirmities, that he may also forgive other their infirmities: which Christ letteth forth else where in a most goodly parable, which he concludeth in these words: *So likewise shall mine heavenly Father doe unto you, except ye forgive from your hearts, each one to his brother their trespasses.* And so we pray dayly in the Lords prayer, with an addition saying: forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. Is this a hard matter, if I a wretched sinner, doe forgive my neighbour his trespasses and his infirmities, whereas the Lord will forgive me my sinnes and my infirmities? If one had killed my father, what were this being compared to my sinne, wherewith I have offended God, and provoked him to anger?

The third part of mercy is, that we give to them that be in miserie and need, and that we helpe them. Whereof *Iohn* speaketh thus *1 Iohn 3. 17.* *Who soever hath this worlds good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* For where the love of God is, it is moved to shew it selfe even in outward workes. Hereunto also pertaineth the saying of Christ *Mat. 5.* *Blessed are the mercifull, for they shall obtaine mercy.* Wherefore the Lord addeth a promise in the Gospel, saying: *Give and it shall be given unto you: a good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over shall men give into your bosom.* And continuing on his speech he saith: *For with what measure yee meet, with the same shall men meet to you againe.* Thus much shall suffice concerning the parts of mercy which we ought to shew to our neighbours. Vnto which the speciall words of Christ ought to exhort us, who when in the Gospel of *Matthew* he had spoken much of a Christian life, and of love to be shewed to our brethren, thus concludeth saying: *What soever ye would that men should do to you, even so doe ye to them: for this is the Law and the Prophets.* *Mat. 7. 12.* Now every one is so affected, that being cast down, and in distresse, he would wish all the world to helpe him. If I be a miserable sinner, drowned in sinnes, bearing a burthned and troubled conscience. I would that the whole world should comfort me, should helpe and succour me, should

should cover my sinne and shame. So I also ought to behaue my self toward my neighbour, not to iudge him, nor to condemn him, but to forgive him his offences, to helpe him, to provide for him, to lend unto him, and give him, even as I would wish to be done unto my selfe if I were driven into distresse, necessity, exile, or poverty. And herein truly Christians are known, if they love one another; if one doe such workes of mercy unto another, as Christ said unto his disciples at his last Supper. I give unto you a new commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. Thus ye have the meaning of this text, it remaineth that we call upon God for his grace. **The 15. Sermon of Dr. Mar in Luther, of the summe of Christian life. 1 Tim.**

1. Verse 5, 6, 7. The end of the commandment is love, &c.

**I**T is well known unto you dearly beloved brethren, with how great severity God hath commanded his word to be heard and learned. For he most highly esteeme it, and hath bestowed much labour in defending it, and publishing it to the world. He hath suffered all the Prophets to come into perills and dangers, at the last also he sent his own sonne because of his word, whom he suffered to die even the death of the crosse. And what persecutions have not the Apostles themselves abode for the words sake? what afflictions have not all the Christians suffered? unto some of which he hath committed the ministrie of his word faithfully to be executed, and to other some hath enjoined the charge of hearing the same. If there were no other cause beside this, whereby we might be moved to heare and learne Gods word, but for that it is the good pleasure, will, and commandment of God, yet this one ought to be sufficient great and weighty. For it is our duty as creatures to obey our Lord and Creator, and that with all readinesse of mind, in as much as he hath given us so many good things, and doth as yet dayly give us more, for which we shall never be able to give him sufficient worthy thanks. Howbeit he is not content, only to have commanded us to doe this, or to require it of us as bounden duty, but promisseth also that great fruits and commodities shall redound to us thereby, affirming that by this meanes his greatest and highest worship is given unto him. For he is the great Lord, whom we serve, who hath many and divers kinds of service, and manifold manners of worship, and whom we may serve divers wayes. But this only service which is given to him by hearing the word, doth excell all the rest. For if any where a faithfull man of the country, or a Citizen, or any which is otherwise in subjection doth serve his Lord or master, he doth by the same service also serve God. Likewise a child, a man servant or a maid servant, if they be obedient, and doe diligently that which belongeth to their duty, also a Prince and parents if they govern well, and do their duty faithfully.

faithfully: they all doe serve God. For it is his will and commandment which he requireth to be fulfilled of us. Of such services and kinds of worship the world is full. For to every one in his state his workes are committed and enjoyed of God, whereby he daily both ought and may serve him: that there may be left no place for excuse unto any man, as though he were ignorant, how and wherefore he must serve God, neither that any seeke after other things, and invent peculiar manners of serving God, which he hath neither ordained nor commanded, and in the meane season neglect that which he hath commanded, as we have hitherto done in our blindness. But before all other services and doings of duties, he hath most highly esteemed and extolled this service both of them that heare, and them that preach his word. And therefore hath ordained also a speciall day thereunto every weeke, in which wee must apply our selves to no other businesse: Albeit we serve God also by other labours all the week, which he hath bound to no time or certain day. But he hath chosen this day specially, which he hath severely commanded to be kept, whereby men may have time and leisure to perform this service, lest any might flye unto this complaint, that he hath no leisure by reason of his labours and businesse. Moreover he hath appointed speciall places also for his service, as among us temples and houses, where we doe come together. Yea he hath instituted and kept the whole order of ministers hereunto, giving also other things which pertaine to the performing of the charge of this office, as the knowledge of many tongues, and divers gifes beside. And briefly he hath commanded the whole world by a certaine speciall precept, that it thinke this worship or service holy, and far more excellent then the rest. Which he will have so to be delighted in of all Christians, that it may be manifest, how much he doth esteeme it, and how acceptable unto him the exercise and handling of his word is. These things I speake to stirre you up, and to admonish you, why ye ought willingly to heare the word of God, because it is not only the commandment of God, whereunto we must obey, but we have also most ample promises, that it is a thing acceptable to God, and the greatest worship, whereby we can doe honour unto him. And it so farre exceedeth other kinds of worship, as the brightnesse of the sunne exceedeth the brightnesse of the other starres, and the Sabbath day the other dayes, and in a summe, as much as the heavenly kingdome excelleth the kingdomes of the world. For here all things are holy and specially chosen, the time, place, person, and that because of the word, which sanctifieth all things unto us. Wherefore we must earnestly endeavour, that we take heed unto our selves, that we fall not into sluggishnesse, and slothfulnesse, neither that we be carried away with contempt and loathsomenesse of hearing the word, as those delicate and cloyed spirits,

spirits, which seeme unto themselves already to be Masters, and exactly to know all things, yea farre more perfectly then any can teach them. Or as others also, which are seen cloyed with it thinking, why I have heard this very often, wherefore shoul'd I eiesoones hear the same song? They know not how great and marvelous a thing it is, also how great worship of God, which they doe so greatly contemn, and neglect with so great slothfullnesse. Wherefore they doe after unspeakable meanes, provoke God to wrath, having his commandment so in contempt, and suffering his promise to be made void in them, and as much as is in them impairing and hindring by their example so commendable a worship and service of God. But admit it to be true, which notwithstanding is not, that thou doest understand all things perfectly, and as cunningly and skilfully as Christ himself: yet thou seest how earnestly he performeth the office of preaching, and applyeth himself unto his worke, whereof notwithstanding he was most skilfull before, and had not any whit need thereof, as we do greatly need it. So Paul also a Prince of Apostles, albeit he was exceedingly well learned, and so excellent a Doctor, yet going through many countries did eiesoones and every where preach, neither was he wearied or cloyed. Wherefore it is meet that thou be nothing at all wearie of hearing this word, inasmuch as the aid and helpe thereof is exceeding necessary for thee, both against the devell and all other tentations. And although for thy instruction thou shouldest not need it, yet oughtst thou not to be wearied or cloyed, that thou shouldest not bestow a few houres in a day every weeke upon this worship and service of God: seeing that before, applying thy selfe to false worship, when thou didst passe the whole day in temples, and didst run from temple to temple, from altar to altar, thou feltest no tediousnesse or wearinesse, neither didst say as thou dost at this day: O, I have heard no new thing, I have heard these things before: But didst think thus: this day and yesterday I went to heare Masse, and to morrow I mind to goe to heare it again. How much more oughtest thou to do this now, knowing assuredly that this is the right service and worship of God, and to say? Albeit I knew most perfectly, as I do not know, yet to give honour and shew obedience unto God, I will do this service, and because of his love and praise I will heare his word, that my Lord may see by this chiefe worship, wherewith I am especially delighted, that I am willing to serve him. For although no other fruit or profit come unto me thereby, yet I may reioyce that I have performed a most holy and acceptable worke unto him, whereunto other kinds of worships and services being compared, are of small importance. Now, he that doth not care for these things, neither is moved with them, reverently to thinke and highly to esteeme of the word of God, willingly and earnestly to heare and learne it,

when

whensoever opportunity and meanes shall be offered, I will have nothing to doe with him. For neither may I, neither will I draw any man hereunto violently. He that contemneth, let him contemne still, and remaine a swine as he is, even untill that day, when God will kill him & throw him down headlong to hell. For such a one cannot be a good man, neither is it a humane sinne, but a certaine diuellish obstinacie, so greatly to contemne that, whereunto God hath appointed a place, person, time, &c. Whereunto moreover he moveth us by his commandment, lovingly provoketh us by his promises, stirreth us up and admonisheth us by his words, and offereth all these of his own accord, and to be bought with no price or treasure, which is to be farre fetched, or hardly come by, the excellency whereof can indeed be countervailed with no gold. Add hereunto moreover that it is a worlship or service very easie to be done, which may be performed without all labour or griefe, but that thou must attentively heare the Preacher, or apply thy mouth to speake and read, then which labour none surely is more easie. And albeit it is to be feared, that thou shalt therefore beare the crosse, and suffer persecution, yet the worke it selfe is so joynd with no difficultie, as no other labour is, no nor even that that is most easie. If so be that it be not grievous unto thee, to sit the whole day in a taverne or an alchouse, or otherwise with thy companions to trifle and sport thy self with filthy and unseemely iests and pastimes, also to sing and prate, and yet art not wearie, neither feelest any labour: thou mayest with a little paine sit in the temple, and heare the Preacher, whereby thou servest God, and doest that which is acceptable unto him. What wouldest thou doe, if thou shouldest at his commandement carie stones in quaries, or goe armed on Pilgrimage to S. Iames? or if some other laborious and painfull worke should be injoynd thee? as hitherto it hath beene the custome amongst us, when as we would doe all things willingly, whatsoever was enjoynd us, when we were deceived with meeie trifles, and most impudent delusions. But so doth the Devill blind men: in whom also he worketh a satiety and loathing of the word of God, whereby it cometh to passe that they have no regard, what a treasure the word of God is, but live after a beastly sort, contemning all good doctrin. Let us therefore at the last, delight in these things, thinking thus with our selves, that as often as we read or heare the word of God either privily or publique, of whomsoever it be preached, we apply our selves to the chiefe service of God, which pleaseth God exceedingly well. After this sort thou mayest inflame thy selfe to heare, and God will inspire thee with his grace, that the seede of his word be not sowne in vaine, but may bring forth plentiful fruit. For the word is never taught without fruit, whensoever it shall be diligently and attentively heard, neither can it be, but that by eftswoones hearing it, thou shouldest become better.

ter. And albeit for the present time thou seest or feelst no fruit, yet in processe of time thou shalt plainly perceive and seele it. But it were long here to rehearse the fruits proceeding of the word, nay, indeed they can not be all rehearsed.

These things I thought good to speake in stead of a preface before the words of *S. Paul*, to the intent to stirre us up more diligently to hear the word of God: and surely there is great need of such an exhortation daily in every sermon, which also is much pertinent unto the text which we presently have in hand. For *Paul* in this place reprehendeth curious spirits, which goe about by their own wisdom to be masters of the word of God, and doe by and by fallly perswade themselves, that they know it well, and that they need not any more the helpe of any teacher: but turne themselves to trifling and vaine jangling, that they may bring forth some new thing, which the common sort may be desirous to heare, presuming also to be Masters of the Scripture and of all men, labouring to teach every one, and yet not understanding what they speake, or whereof they affirme. For this is a plague and calamity that followeth, where the word of God is not handled diligently and seriously, the learners being weary of hearing and the teachers slouthfull in preaching. Hereof it commeth that so great companies of hearers slide away, and Churches become desolate. Of which calamitie vaine talking spirits are the cause, which promise new things, that they may win the hearts of the multitudes unto themselves, boasting in that they are Masters of the Scripture, and yet are alwayes such men as are ignorant, forasmuch as they have never tryed, what it is to teach other: which we doe now plainly see, and the wrath of God is at hand ready to punish our contempt and unthankfulnesse. Therefore *Paul* beginneth his Epistle to his Disciple *Timothee* so, that he should take heed, that such teachers doe not arise, which can talke many things of the law, bringing many new questions and doctryns, what is to be done, how righteousness is to be obtained, all which they doe for ostentation sake, that they may be seene and praised, and seeme to be more learned then other, and yet they never came so farre as to teach any certaine thing, or that which might be counted to be of any importance, but doe all things confusedly and out of good order. Such bablers use only these words, that we must be honest, that good workes must be done, and God must be served, &c. but they understand not the sense of those words, what they meane. And being asked how we must doe good workes, now they teach this particular worke to be done, an other time an other worke, as, offer so much sacrifice at this altar, get thee into this or that Monasterie, runne unto this Saint, here erect a chappell to the honour of such a Saint, in an other place found a Masse, light tapers, eat fish, buy indulgences, &c. Which being done, they by and by bring an other worke,  
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and forthwith after that another. So they know not how to instruct any after a constant and certaine manner of teaching, much lesse can they say, this is, or in this doth the summe of Christian life consist, &c. And yet in the meane season those things must be counted very excellent that they teach, so much doe they boast, and promise almost golden mountaines, as though they alone were Doctors, that might not be gainsaid, and controulers and Masters of all other. But he is to be counted an excellent Master, and highly to be esteemed, which teacheth the chiefe point and whole summe of doctrine, to wit, how the heart and conscience, yea and the whole man must live. They know nothing of that thing, although they be very full of words, but doe altogether erre from the summe and principall point of the law. In the meane season they intangle the minds of the hearers with such a confused company of words, that they know neither how to make a beginning nor end of speaking, and it is uncertaine whereunto that disordered company of words doth serve, whereby no man can be made better, much lesse can he confirme his conscience thereby, as we hitherto have enough and too much seen, and tryed in the Papacie among our Preachers of dreames. What therefore is the summe of that doctrine, which is to be taught to the people? St. Paul answereth: *The end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfained.* This is that Heilen, here thou hast the summe of Christian life most excellently and fully comprehended, compendiously and briefly uttered, and which may be not unfaily printed in thy memorie. Thou must endeavour, if thou wilt not erre from the law, but attain to the chief poynt thereof (that thou mayest know what is to be done and what to be left undone) to have love proceeding out of a pure heart, from a good conscience, and faith unfained. If thy love be of this sort, then is it right, otherwise thou erreth from the meaning of the whole law. Now these words are profound, and comprehend much matter in them: Wherefore we must partly expound them, that they may be the better understood, and that we may accustom our selves to Pauls manner of speech. First he attributeth to love the summe of the whole law, wherein it wholly consisteth. And to love is nothing else (as I think it is known to all) but to favour and embrace one from the heart, and to shew and performe unto him all the duties of friendship and good will. Now those iangling Doctors also use such words, preaching and boasting many things of love, but all by peece-meale and particularly applyed to their own trifles and follies. Even as hereticks, wicked men and ungracious wretches have love also, but that which consisteth onely among themselves, and them there are of the same sort with them, in the meane season they hate and persecute all good Christians, whom they would willingly accuse of murder, if they could, &c. But this doth not yet deserve to be called

called true love, if I choose one or two, whose conditions like and please me, whom I doe friendly and lovingly imbrace, and no man beside them. It is called a particular love, which proceedeth not out of a pure heart, but from an infected and filthie heart. For true love floweth out of a pure heart, when I endeavour as God hath commanded me, to poure forth my love toward my neighbour, and to favour all without difference, whether they be friends or enemies, even as our heavenly father himselfe doth, who suffereth his Sun to arise on the good and evil, and sendeth his rain to the thankfull and unthankfull, maketh the earth to bring forth many good things, giveth money, riches, fruits, chattell, and many times especially unto them that are the worst of all other. But from whence commeth the doing of these things? truly from pure love, whereof his heart is most full. This he poureth forth abundantly upon all, omitting no man, whether he be good or evil, worthy or unworthy. And this is called true, divine, entire, and perfect love, which loveth no one, neglecting the rest, neither cutteth nor divideth it self, but imbraceth all indifferently. The other is love of Theeves and Publicans, if I love him, which is for my turn, and may doe me a pleasure, and which esteemeth well of me, and dispise him that contemneth me, and which is not on my side. For that doth not proceed from the heart which ought wholly to be good and pure, indifferently toward all, but he that is iniqued with such love, seeketh his own things, and is full of love himself, and not of love towards others. Neither doth he love any man, but for his own commodities sake, regarding only that, which may serve for his own use, seeking his own profit by every man, and not the profit of his neighbour. If he be praised and honoured, he laugheth, but being looked upon with sower countenance, or an unthankfull word being spoken unto him, he stomaketh, curseth and findeth fault, so that all friendship forthwith ceaseth. Contrariwise he that hath a pure heart must be so affected according to the word of God, and his example, that he favour every one, and bestow liberall and friendly benefits upon them, even as God hath favoured him, and of his divine love hath bestowed benefits upon him. But some men will say, he is mine enemy, and doth evil unto me. Surely he is an enemy also to God, unto whom he doth many more things displeasing unto him, then he can doe either to me or thee. But therefore my love ought not to be extinguished or cease, because he is evil, and altogether unworthy thereof. If he be evil, he shall at the last suffer punishment according to his deeds, but his wickednesse must not overcome me. But if I can through love rebuke and admonish him, or pray for him, that he may amend, and escape punishment, I must doe it readily. I must not be an enemy unto him, or doe evil unto him in any wise. For what profit should redound unto me thereby? neither am I made better thereby, and I make him so much



showe. This therefore ought to delight me, if I shall favour him, and bestow benefits upon him, if so be that he will suffer them to be bestowed on him, and pray unto God for him, so I may enjoy peace, and have no trouble or contention with any man, and perhaps I may so profit him, that he will change his life unto the better, and amend. Otherwise surely love being divided or separated, I have more bitterness and sorrow by them, whom I hate, then I have joy and profit by them, whom I love and keep company with. And this is said to trouble the fountaine or water, from whence pure love cannot flow. As it is certaine that the Jewes also did, against whom *Paul* speaketh in this place: for they loved them only of whom they were loved, whereby they defiled the sincerity of love with mans affections, and therefore their heart could not be pure. But whereby is the heart purified? I answer, it cannot be purified by any other thing better, then by that soveraign puritie, which is the word of God. Receive that into thy mind, and order thy life according to the rule thereof, and thy heart is purified. As in this place, see thou set the word before thee, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy selfe*. And follow that which it commandeth, and by and by thou shalt see whether it purgeth and clenseth whatsoever desire there is in thee of thine own profit, or whatsoever love of thy self. For commanding thee to love thy neighbour, it maketh exception of none, either friend, or foe. Albeit some man be evil and hath been often times iniurious unto thee, notwithstanding he doth not therefore loose this name, that he is not to be called thy neighbour, but nevertheless remaineth thy flesh and blood, and is comprehended in these words, thou shalt love thy neighbour, &c. Therefore I say if thou shalt consider him and so behave thy self toward him, as the word teacheth thee, then is thy heart made pure, and love sincere, so that thou makest no false difference of persons, neither otherwise considerest him, then another, which is good, and one of thy familiars. Indeed we cannot deny this to be true, that an honest man is more worthy to be loved, unto whom also every one doth more willingly apply himself by nature, then unto the conversation of wicked men, whose familiarity there is no good man that doth not abhorre, howbeit flesh and blood is the cause that true and Christian love is not among us. For a Christian must not derive his love from the person, as the world doth: as some young men seeing a maid, is in love with her because of her fairnesse and beauty, and a covetous man taketh his love and desire of his money, a Lord or Prince of honour and power, &c. For all such love is said to be feined and proceeding not from whence it ought, cleaving to the good things, wherewith he seeth the person adorned, neither doth it continue any longer, then that which he loveth, continueth, and as long as he may enjoy it. But true love ought to be such as floweth out of a continuall fountaine, and proceedeth

ceedeth from the bottome of the heart, as a fresh and continuall water always springing forth, which cannot be stopped, and is never dried up. This love saith after this sort: I love thee, not for thy honestie or dishonestie, for I doe not derive my love from thy honestie, as from a strange fountain, but out of mine own fountain, that is, out of the word of God which is planted in my heart, which commandeth me to love my neighbour, from hence love plentifully floweth open to all, which have need thereof, watering all both friends and foes: yea chiefly prepared and ready for foes, inasmuch as they have more need, that they may by my means be brought to amendment, I praying for them, and doing according to my abilitie that which I am able, that they also leaving their evill wayes, may be delivered from sinnes, and the snares of the Divell. And this is said to be love flowing from the heart, and not derived from without: for he that is endued with such love, findeth not such thing in him whom he loveth, from whence he should derive it. But because he is a Christian, because he layeth hold of the word, which is altogether pure by it self, by the power of it his heart also is made pure and replenished with true love. Whereupon he powreth forth the treasures of his love toward every man, neither is he moved or turned away with the person of any, whether he be good or evill. Behold, thus should they preach, which will rightly teach love required of the law, whereof our bablers know nothing, neither have any regard thereof, albeit they talk many things of the law, and dispute much of love. They doe not see, no they doe not so much as once think, that love must be such, that it flow out of the heart, and that the fountaine must be first pure and cleare. This never descended into their heart, although they heare, read, and teach many things of it. They are occupied with very uncertain, and unprofitable cogitations, yea rather with dead dreames. Wherefore what soever is preached of workes and of a good life, that only is well done which proceedeth from the word of God, a pure heart, and a true faith. This thou mayest see in all states, how every one ought in his calling to dee the office injoynd him, and exercise the workes of love. A servant labouring, and thinking no more then thus: My Lord or master payeth me my wages, for which only I serve him, otherwise I would not vouchsafe to looke upon him, &c. hath not a pure heart, for hee doth not serve, but for a piece of bread, or for his hire, which being taken away, his service also ceaseth. But if he were a right and true Christian, he would rather be thus affected: I will not therefore serve because my Master payeth me wages, because he is honest or dishonest, &c. but therefore, because the word of God doth speak thus unto me: *Servants be obedient unto your Masters as unto Christ, &c. Eph. 6. 5.* This service proceedeth of it own accord out of the heart, which layeth hold on the word and greatly esteemeth it, saying: I will serve my Master, and

take my wages, but this shall be the chiefest thing, for which I doe this service, that I may serve my God and Lord Iesus Christ, who hath laid the condition and state of a servant upon me, which I know doth please him in me, &c. Here thou seest a true work proceeding out of a pure heart. So also let a Lord or Prince, and they which have the charge of governing the common weale, think thus: God hath committed unto me the office of a Magistrate, that I should be a ruler: now if I will have regard unto this only, that I may enjoy my dignity, riches, and power, it is certain that my heart is not pure, and yet in the meane season I doe the worke of a Ruler, so, that the world cannot complaine of me, neither Cesar, or the Lawyers can blame or find fault with me by their lawes. Even as neither a servant serving only for wages can be reprehended of the world, whether he seeketh his own things or not. Surely the word of God is not regarded in the office of a ruler that doth so, but his own idoll, his own glory, money and power, &c. But if this affection be in his heart: because I am occupied in this office, wherein God hath placed me, and the word commandeth him that beareth rule to be carefull, it is meet that I doe execute the same with all faithfulness and diligence, to the praise and glory of my God: The execution of the office of such a ruler endued with such a mind, commeth out of a pure and sincere heart, wherewith God and good men are delighted. There is moreover in him love, which doth not cleave to the person or outward things, but beginneth in the heart, which the word of God maketh manifest, which forasmuch as it is pure and cleane, doth also purifie the heart. And so his government and workes are the meere services of God, and most acceptable sacrifices unto him, seeing that they are done only according to the word of God, and for God his sake. But our talkers cannot reach this, neither are able to iudge of it, only crying out when they teach best of all, that we must be honest. They bring a certaine iudiciall sermon out of the lawes of men, as Cesar and his clarkes teach. But how the heart is purified, they have never somuch as understood or thought any thing thereof, or how love is to be derived to all states and conditions of men according to the word of God. Thus must thou say moreover even in spiritual offices and states also: If I or any other shall preach to get some good benefice, whereas otherwise I would easily cease from doing this office, I may preach the Gospel, but my heart is not pure, but most plainly polluted. Therefore although I doe long and much affirme, that it is a good worke and a weighty office, yet doe I not performe it aright, forasmuch as I doe it not from the heart. But then only it is rightly done when the heart hath his affection: albeit I must get my living thereby, yet this ought not to be the chiefe end thereof, but because God hath called me unto it, and hath committed it unto me diligently to be done,

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it remaineth, that I doe with all diligence labour therein to the glory of God and salvation of soules, which I doe otherwise also for the love of the word willingly and from my heart. Hereby I seek neither love or friendship, nor honours, nor thankfulness of men, but my works come from the heart, which I first do, before I obtain any honour, glory, reward, money, or favour, although if those come and follow, I may have and receive them without sinne. Lo, thus the word is the cause, foundation, ground, fountaine and spring of love comming out of the heart, and of all good works that please God, which he can by no meanes away with, if the heart be not pure before: for neither are workes acceptable to men, which are done without the heart by dissimulation. Now if Cesar and men require the heart although they cannot see it, of how much greater estimation is that heart before God, which doth all things for the words sake? Therefore he also suffereth his word to be preached, that we may order all our life according to the prescript thereof. And let us not suffer our selves to be hindered, trayed from it, or discouraged with the let or hindrance of any thing, although for it we shall suffer all kind of losses, unthankfulness, contempt, &c. but let us break and goe through all brunts with a bold and manly courage, and say thus: we began nothing for any mans sake, neither will we leave of any thing because of any man, but that we may doe that which is acceptable to God, we will go on still, howsoever things fall out with us. They which doe thus, become men excellent and most highly to be esteemed, who are ready to doe all duties, and serve God with all readinesse of mind and love not feined. For the fountaine and spring is good, not derived and brought in from without. These things I thought good briefly to speak of the first part how the heart is purified by the word alone, and not as the Monks have dreamed, by a fight taken upon them against evil cogitations, and by feining of good thoughts. For what thoughts soever thou shalt feine, the heart shall remaine uncleane, if the word of God be not in it, although it pretend a great shew of a Godly life, as *Paul* witnesseth. But this purenes, whereof he speaketh, doth extend farther then outward and corporall purenes doth, which the Jewes did use, eating and drinking their hands being often washed, which our religious men also use in their fasting, diversitie of apparell, orders and rites, &c. for this is called purenesse of the spirit, which we then have, when being instructed by the word of God, we know thereby how hee is to be served in every state and calling, and endeavour to trim our lives according therunto. Now followeth the second part concerning a good conscience, whereof also we must intreat, to wit, that love must come from such a heart, as hath a joyfull and quiet conscience, both toward God, and also toward men. Toward men so, as *Paul* glorifieth of him-  
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self, that he lived so, that he offended no man, troubled no man, was an evill example and burthen to no man, but all that did see and heare him, must needs witness, that he indifferently served all, helped all, counselled all & dealt friendly & gently with all. Such a conscience *Moses* also glorieth of against the seditious. Numb. 16. *Thou knowest that I have not taken so much as an asse from them, neither have I hurt any of them.* And *Jeremiah* Chap. 18. *Remember, O Lord, how that I stood before thee to speak good for them, and to turne away thy wrath from them.* Likewise doth *Samuel*, 1 King 12. *I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day: behold here I am, beare record of me before the Lord, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose asse have I taken? whom have I done wrong to? whom have I hurt? or of whose hand have I received any bribe?* And so forth as followeth in the same place. Such boasting and glory every Christian must attaine unto, that he doe so live toward every man, and so exercise and shew his love, that no man can worthily complain any whit of him, whereby he shall trouble or dismay his conscience, but that all that will confesse the truth, may be enforced to say, that he hath so lived, that he hath been an example to every man of living well, which will only but follow him. And this is called a good conscience before men, or against the complaints and reprehension of men. And albeit such a conscience is not able to stand before the judgement of God, nor any purenes of the heart in the outward life and worke of love (we continuing in sinning often times before God) yet we must attaine unto such a heart, that we may comfort our selves before him also, and say: this God hath bidden and commanded to be done, therefore I doe it with a pure heart and a good conscience, neither would I willingly doe otherwise, neither of purpose hurt or trouble any man, but whatsoever I say and doe, that is willed and commanded of God. Let no Christian suffer such a confidence to be wrested from him, that he may boast himself by the word of God against the whole world. For he that hath no regard how he leadeh his life, that he may stop the mouths of all blamers and accusers, and cleare himself before all, and testifie that he hath lived, spoken, and done well, he I say is not yet a Christian, having not in himself a pure heart and love. For we will not presume of the doctrine of faith, as though that being had, every man may doe what he list, whether it be profitable or unprofitable to his neighbour, that we must in no case do. Otherwise that doctrine should have the name to give licence & free liberty for every one to do what he wil. But we must so behave our selves, that we may obtain love out of a pure heart and a good conscience, that no man may accuse us of any crime.

And although these things be spoken of our life and workes, and a Christian is an other manner of man before God, as we shall heare, yet we must earnestly endeavour our selves in this also, that we may be with-  
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our blame before God. And when we shall not attaine thereunto, wee must flee to prayer, and say before God and man : forgive us our trespasses, &c. that at the least wise, our life may remaine without blame, and we may obtaine a good conscience before men. And if this cannot be brought to passe by perfect love and purenes of the heart, yet let it be done by humility, that we may pray for, and desire of all men pardon of our offences, when as we have not purely & perfectly done our duty, or are not able to doe it, so that thy neighbour may be enforced to say, albeit thou hast greatly hurt me, or hast not done thy duty toward me. as it was meet, yet forasmuch as thou humblest thy selfe, I will willingly forgive thee, and take it in the best part. And for this humilities sake I say thou art a good man, which doest not stand obstinately, as though thou wouldest advisedly and of purpose offend against me, but doest turne thy selfe unto love. Therefore that life is as yet said to be without blame, which albeit it was subject to reprehension, is with humility covered, and reformed, that no man can worthily complaine thereof. Thus the Law should be expounded and handled, that both love toward every man may rightly proceed out of a pure heart, for God his sake, and the conscience may stand before the world. And this ought to have beene practised of those vaine talkers in their Sermons, their cold trifles & vain follies being neglected & left of. But that al these things may stand & be of force before God also, there yet remaineth one thing which pertaineth hereunto, which is that, that followeth. [ *And of faith unfained* ] For as I have said, albeit I have a good conscience before men, and do exercise love out of a pure heart, yet the old *Adam*. that is flesh and blood remaine in me subject to sins, whereby it commeth to passe that I am not altogether holy and pure. And as *Paul* saith *Gal. 5. The flesh lusteth against the spirit, &c.* And *Rom. 7.* he affirmeth that he must fight a dayly fight against himselfe, because he can not doe that which is good, and yet he would willingly doe it. The spirit indeed would very willingly live purely and perfectly according to the word of God, but the rebellious flesh resisteth the desire thereof, assailing us with many great tentations, that we should seek honour, wealth, riches, pleasure, and should become slothful & negligent in our state and duty. So there remaineth a continuall fight in us, because of the unpurenesse of our person, wherein there is not yet sincere purenesse, nor a good conscience, and perfect love, unless there be perhaps somewhat before men. But before God many things are found lacking in us, many things are worthy of blam, although al things be perfect before men. For examples sake : although *David* can obtain that confidence before men, that he can be reprehended of no man, and the holy Prophets *Ezay, Ieremie, &c.* do glory and are sure, whatsoever they have done according to their duty, is right and well done, seeing it is the word and commandment

dement of God, wherein they have exercised themselves with a pure heart and good conscience, yet can they not stand by this conscience before the judgment of God, but are compelled to say: if we should strive with thee in judgement, then no man shall have so good a conscience or so pure a heart, which doth not dread thy judgement, and acknowledge himselfe to be worthy of reprehension and blame. For God hath reserved that prerogative unto himselfe, that he may contend in judgement with every one, albeit he be holy, and accuse him of deadly sinne: neither is there any so holy, whom he may not iudge & condemn as worthy of destruction. Wherefore although both the heart be pure & the conscience good before men, yet must thou endeavour to attain unto this also, that the same may be likewise good before God, that he may not finde fault with them, but that they may be safe and quiet from his judgement, as they are before men. Hereunto now pertaineth the third part, that is, faith. And this is the principle part and chiefe precept, containing all the rest in it, that wee may know, that where love is not yet perfect, the heart not sufficiently pure, and the conscience not quiet, and God doth yet find something which is worthy blame, where the world can finde fault with nothing, faith must moreover come, and such a faith, which is not fained, and defiled with confidence of a mans own holinesse. For wheresoever this is not, there the heart is never purified before God, neither shall the conscience be able to stand, if they be examined by severe judgement and exact censure. Men indeed shall not justly blame me, albeit I glory, that I have served them by preaching, helping, governing, and by doing the dutie of an overseer or ruler, &c. with all faithfulnessse. And if I have done any thing more or lesse then I ought, I am sorie at my heart, for I would verily willingly have done all things that I ought. Wherefore I am quiet and already excused, neither have they any more, which they may rightly require of me, but are enforced to acquire and discharge me. But here I must attaine unto this also, that my heart be so pure, and my conscience so good before God, that he may not by any meanes accuse and condemne me. Howbeit we find not this in our selves, although we may glory somewhat thereof before the world, I must therefore obtaine some other thing whereunto I may trust, if I shall come into perill, and within the throwing of the dart, as it is commonly said, and I must say to my fearefull and terrified conscience, I have done that which I have been able, and who knoweth how often I have done lesse then I ought? for I could not see and marke all things, as *David* also saith, *Psal. 19. Who can understand his fautes?* Therefore I can lay no foundation of trust upon mine own holinesse and purenesse. Well, I have the word, to live, love, and have a good conscience, which is pure and holy. But this I want, that I cannot conclude, that that is in my heart, neither doe I have so good a conscience in me, as the law requireth of me. For there is

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no man living in the earth, which can say this truly. I know that I have done all things, and that I doe owe nothing before God. But the most holy ones must say thus: I have done surely according to my abilitie, that which I have been able, but I have offended much ofner, then I know. Wherefore our own conscience doth wicnesse against us, accusing and convincing us, although before the world we are most free from reprehension or blame. For it must follow the word which saith: this thou shouldest have done, this thou shouldest have left undone. It cannot avoid the judgement of this, nor answer to the accusation thereof, but it is at the least wise enforced to stand in an uncertaintie, being wholly wrapped in doubting. But if it doubt, then is it by and by convinced: for it standeth not before God, but flieth and trembleth.

Wherefore the principall part of our doctrine must here helpe us, to wit, that our Lord Iesus Christ being sent of the father, did come into the world and hath suffered and dyed for us, whereby he hath reconciled the good will and favour of the father to us, his wrath being appeased, and doth now sit at the right hand of the father, having regard of us as our Saviour, and as a continuall Mediator and Intercessour for us, making intercession for us, as for them which cannot have and obtaine of themselves such purenesse and a good conscience. Therefore by his help and benefit we may say before God: although I am not pure, neither have a good conscience, yet I cleave to him by faith, which hath perfect purenesse and a good conscience, which he giveth for me, or rather which he giveth unto me. For he alone is he, of whom we read written, as Peter and Isaiab chap. 53. say: *who did no sin, neither was there guile found in his mouth.* And this praise belongeth only unto him, neither hath he any need to pray, forgive us our debts, neither of that article of the Creed, I beleieve the forgiveness of sinnes, &c. but he is free and quiet in perpetuall, pure and perfect righteousness and purenesse, unto whose charge none can lay any thing, nor accuse his conscience of any crime, not man, nor the Devill, no nor God himself: for he himself is God, who himself cannot accuse himself. And this is called faith neither coloured nor fained, which the conscience striving and trembling, dareth come forth in the sight of God, and say: Almighty God, I am innocent before the world and quiet in mind, so that no man can lay any thing to my charge, or find fault with me. For albeit I have not done all things, yet I aske pardon of every one, that he will forgive me for God his sake, even as I againe forgive all. By this meanes I have cut of the complaints of all, who have no more which they may rightly lay against me. But before thee I must lay aside this trust and confidence, and must wholly acknowledge the guiltinesse of innumerable sinnes, and say as David said Psal 143. *Lord enter not into judgement with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.*



*stified.* Wherefore I cannot contend with thee, if thou requirest an account of my life. But I appeale from the judgement seat to the mercy seat; I doe easily suffer, that I be dealt with according to law and right before the judgement seat of the world, and I will willingly answer, and will doe what I am able: Howbeit before thee I will not come into judgement, but I desire grace, which I take hold of on every side. For thus the Scripture teacheth me, that God hath set two seats before men: the one a judgement seat, for them which are yet secure and untractable, and acknowledge not their sinnes, neither will confesse and acknowledge them: the other a mercie seat, for miserable and fearfull consciences, which feeble their sinnes, dread the judgement of God, and doe earnestly make request for grace. And this mercie seat is Christ himself, as Paul witnesseth, Rom. 3. whom God hath set forth unto us, that we might have refuge unto him, being not able to stand before God by our own power. Unto him I will apply my self, if I have done or doe lesse then is meet: and how great purchase and goodnesse soever my heart and conscience have before men, I will have it here to be altogether nothing, and hidden, and covered as it were with a vau, yea with a faire heaven, which may mightily defend it, which is called grace and remission of sinnes. Under the defence thereof my heart and conscience must creep, and remaine safe and quiet. For so he commanded his Apostles to preach and publish, that through his name all that beleeve in him, shall receive remission of sinnes. Againe, He that shall beleeve and be baptizyd, shall be saved. And John 3. he saith: God so loved the world, that he hath given his only begotten Sonne, that whosoever beleeueth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. Therefore God hath set forth the mercie seat unto us, whereunto he leadeth us from the judgement seat. Let us leave other before the judgement seat, namely those proud holy ones, contemners and persecutors of the word of God, where they shall heare sentence according to their deeds. We will suffer these to abide in their circle, untill they have humbled themselves: but we will not abide in this circle, but will depart from it as farre as we shall be able, into the circle of the mercie seat, unto which we doe appeale. Neither have we invented this of our own braine, but it is the word of God himselfe, which threatneth horrible judgement to them, which come with their own holinesse, and trusting thereunto, do hope that they shall be able to stand before God the judge, neglecting the mercie seat of Christ. For the sentence standeth, that they shall be set before the judgement seat, as Christ saith, Iohn. 3. He that beleeueth not is condemned already, because he hath not beleeved in the name of that only begotten Son of God. He that beleeueth in him is not condemned, that is, shall not come to the judgment seat, but to the mercie seat, where there is no wrath or rigour, but grace and forgiveness of sinnes,

sinnes, all things being remitted which be not pure, yea being blotted out and so consumed, as a drop of water is consumed of the heat of the Sunne. For where the mercy seat reigneth, there is nothing else, but meer forgiveness and remission of sinnes.

This therefore being knowne, we must exactly understand the difference between the Law and the Gospel, whereof we often teach. The Law draweth us to the judgement seat, requiring of us integrity of life, love out of a pure heart and a good conscience, it maketh us all so to exercise our selves therein, and must goe no further. But when it shall come and accuse thee, and will reason with thee, and have those things to be performed which it requireth, then shalt thou be greatly troubled. For albeit thou hast done them, yet art thou not able to stand before God, before whose judgement seat, many things are yet found wanting in thee, which should have beene done of thee, and thou hast left them undone, neither are they known unto thy selfe. Whether then wilt thou turne thee? Here the Law urgeth thee by all meanes, and thine own conscience being witness, accuseth thee, requiring the sentence of the judge against thee. Then must thou despaire, there is no counsell or helpe to be had, except thou knowest to flie from the judgement seat to the mercie seat, as for example: Admit some Bishop die in his own holiness, who while he lived was as it seemed of a good life, and acknowledged Christ no otherwisethan a cruell judge (as hath been hitherto preached of him, neither hath he been otherwise set forth, as he is also wont to be unto such, not of his own nature, for indeed he is most gracious and comfortable, but because they esteem him for no other in their heart) behold this man is a hindrance unto himself that he cannot obtaine any grace. For he knoweth no difference of the judgement seat and the mercie seat, yea he is altogether ignorant whether there be a mercie seat, from which he so erreth, and must be bound to the judgement seat. But we teach thus, that Christ is so to be learned and considered, that we be most certainly perswaded that hee sitteth before miserable and trembling consciences, that believe in him, not as an angry judge which commandeth forthwith to carrie violently them that be guiltie unto punishment, but as a gentle, loving, and comfortable Mediatour, between my fearefull conscience and God, which saith unto me: If thou be a sinner, and astonied, and the Diuell laboureth to draw thee to the judgement seat, then see that thou flie unto me, and feare no wrath or anger. Wherefore? Even because I sit here, that, if thou beleeve in me, I may make intercession for thee to my father, that no anger and severitie may hurt thee: for all anger and punishment shall be sooner laid upon me, then be borne of thee. Howbeit that cannot be: for he is the only beloved sonne, in whom all grace and favour dwelleth, whom as often as the father doth behold, he cannot  
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but replenish both heaven and earth with grace and favour, and forget all wrath and displeasure. And whatsoever he shall aske of his father, that he shall forthwith obtaine without all repulse or denyall. So by faith we are made wholly blessed and safe, subiect no more to any damnation, yet not for our own holinesse and purenesse, but for Christs sake, to whom we cleave by faith as to our mercy seat, being assuredly perswaded, that with him there remaineth no anger, but meere love, and pardon, and forgiveness of sinnes. Thus the heart is purified before God, and the conscience made good and quiet, not in respect had of mine own purenes or life led before the world, but by trust and confidence of that excellent treasure, which my heart apprehendeth, which is unto me in stead of a pledge & fulnesse, when as before God I am not able to pay.

But herein the whole force of the matter consisteth that we do againe and againe take heede, that our faith be not false, or as *Paul* speaketh, fained. For if this erre, and deceive us, all things deceive us. For there have been many in all ages, as there be also at this day, which can speak many things of faith, and will be Masters not only of the Law, but even of the Gospell also. Who say the same that we doe, that faith performeth and doth all things, but that the law and good works are also to be joyned unto it, and that otherwise, if these be not added, faith availeth nothing, in which words they mix & mingle together our life & works, and Christ. But this is not purely and sincerely to have taught faith, but to have coloured, defiled and corrupted faith, so that it can no more be called faith, but a fained colour and counterfeiting of faith, the trust and confidence of the heart standing not purely toward Christ, as the only mercy seate but being grounded upon our own holinesse, as being able to stand before the judgement seate. Wherefore doing thus, we are most rightly cast of before God, and condemned unto destruction, whereof we are most worthy. For if faith must be pure and void of all counterfeiting and faining, then these two things, Christ and my works must be rightly discerned and severed one from the other. For this is plaine even to him that is blinde, that Christ and his workes are not my life and my workes, but are seperated from the Law and from the workes of all men, yea and that by a greater distance, then man is unlike or differeth from man. For neither can I say that I and *Cesar* or the Bishop of Rome are the same thing, yet I am much neerer and liker unto either of them, then a morall man and a sinner is unto Christ the Lord, who is not only a pure and holy man, free from all spot and blot, but is moreover God also. Therefore let the Law and the purenesse of thy heart, yea and thy good conscience avails in earth only toward men: But where the mercy seate is, to wit at the right hand of the Father, & the Mediator between thee and God, thither no mans workes & merits ought to have accessse, much lesse be they there of any force or value: Wherefore

Wherefore Christ is purely to be seperated from all my li fe, deeds and worker, and we must without exception conclude, that he is an another thing then our life led before men with a pure heart and a good conscience, albeit it be led even perfectly and without blame. For it being presented before God, and by the Law brought to the judgement seate, I am condemned and lost. But Christ is the mercy seate, and all that cleave unto him by faith, cannot be condemned and judged. So the judgement seate together with the Law and all my life goe into one part: but my faith must flie and leape farre unto another part, and joyne it selfe unto him which is pure, and hath no sinne, of whom the scripture speaketh: he that believeth in him shall not be condemned. Because he is present in the sight of the father, and maketh intercession for me. Moreover he giveth me his owne purenesse and holinesse, that being cloathed and adorned therewith, I may be able to stand before God, and all wrath and displeasure may be taken away, in stead whereof I may enjoy meere love and favour. Lo, thus faith remaineth pure and free from counterfeiting, for it resteth not upon my workes, that because of them it should behove God to be Gentle and favourable unto me, as a false and fained faith doth, which mingleth together mans merits and the grace of God, and although it hold the wordes of Christ, yet hath it the confidence and trust of the heart reposed in it selfe, so, that it is certaine, that it is only a colour which cannot long continue. For the matter cometh at the last to this point, that believing that God is favourable unto thee because of thy life led without fault or blame, thou must despaire and say: who knoweth what I have done? Whereby am I certaine that I have neglected nothing through carelesnesse, or that nothing is wanting in me? In this doubtfullnesse of minde the foundation faileth, sliding away under thee like unto sand moved and stirred, and so faith is of no force or value at all. Wherefore it is not unfitly called fained and painted faith, through which one seeth as it were through a lattis or painted glasse, through which the thing that is scene representeth the collour of the glasse, and yet is not indeede of that collour. So they beleeve that that affection is in God, that he vouchsafeth to regard our workes and meritts. Which they paint forth according to their own opinion and dreames, which are utterly false, rash and unadvised. And so judging God and all things according to them, they see only as it were through a lattis or painted glasse. But so only thou shalt behold him with pure and cleare eyes, if thou doe well separate the judgement seate and the mercy seate one from the other, that heaven with the stars thereof may remaine pure to grace and remission of sinnes obtained by the Mediator, where Christ reigneth with his workes, and the earth also with her trees and herbs, whither we must be referred with our workes. The matter I say must be brought of us to that passe, if we will stand with a right and an unfeined

ned faith before God, that we doe purely distinguish and sever our selves, our life, and Christ or the mercy seat: and he that will not doe this, but presenteth himself before the judgement seat with a bold courage, shall feeble the reward of his rashnesse. I my self have been in that danger, and as it were a mouse having tasted pitch have run away, reioy-  
 cing greatly that liberty was given to me to attaine to the mercie seat, and now I am enforced to say, that albeit I have lived very well before men, yet all things committed of me contrariwise, do remaine beneath under the judgement seat, to be punished according to the sentence and Judgement of God. Now I have no other comfort, nor no other help and counceill of my salvation, then that Christ is my mercy seat, who hath never offended, hath defiled himself with no sinne, who dyed and rose againe for me, and sitteth now at the right hand of the father, and defendeth me under his shadow and protection that I need not doubt, that I am by his benefite and intercession safe before God from all wrath and terror of judgement. Thus faith remaineth in all things pure, setting no other thing before it self, whereunto it may boldly trust, but Christ alone. Now he that knew this well, should be a man of a re-  
 lute mind. For all other have to doe with a feined faith, boasting many things of faith, but mingling all things together, like as vintners mix wine with water, by this that they say, if thou live thus, God will be favourable unto thee, and they make the judgement seat of the mercy seat, and the mercy seat of the judgement seat, which by no meanes can be, for the judgement seat shall remaine, &c. Wherefore separate these two one from the other as farre as thou shalt be able, that they come not together, namely the life and holinesse together with the Judgement seat into one place, which may drive and enforce thee to have a good conscience, and to lead an upright life before men. But offer thy sinnes to the mercy seat to be transferred into another place, where God lovingly receiving thee, will imbrace thee as a beloved son, and will never remember more any wrath or sinnes. If such doctrine of faith were set forth unto men, then should it be excellently well done, and all other things should follow of their own accord, as purenesse of heart and goodnesse of conscience, through right and perfect love. For whosoever is by faith quiet in his heart, and assured that he hath God favourable unto him, who is not angry with him, albeit he hath deserved his wrath divers wayes, he doth all things with a glad and cheerful mind. Moreover he liveth so also toward men, that he is loving and beneficiall toward all, although they be not worthy of love. He is quiet toward God through Christ the Mediatour, who will not throw him dewne headlong into hell, but doth lovingly favour him, and lifteth him up into heaven. And this is the chiefe quietnesse, and principle poynt and foundation of our salvation. Afterwards he doth in his life

life shew himselfe dutifull also towards his neighbour, doing all the best things he is able unto him, whatsoever his state or dutie commandeth or requireth. And when he doth lesse then is meet, he asketh pardon of his negligence before God and men, so that there is left occasion neither to him, nor the world afterward to rebuke him, power also to devoure him is taken from hell, and to teare him in pieces, from the devill. Thus a man is said to be in all things perfect, toward men by love, and toward God not by the law, but by Christ, whom he apprehendeth by his faith, as the mercy seat: Which gagerh his holynesse for the beleevors, or rather giveth it to them, so, that in him they have all things that are necessary to salvation. Now this is right & pure doctrine, which should be exercised and taught unto men distinctly, that they might know how they may be able to stand both before God and men, that faith and love be not mingled together, or life referred both to God and men. This ought to have bin performed of those glorious and arrogant teachers, seeing that they will be counted masters of the law, that the difference of the law and faith might be well known unto all. For although it be taught and repeated with never so great diligence, yet notwithstanding it is very hard to be well and thoroughly learned, especially to us which have been instructed and trained up in the doctrine of workes, and led only to the law and our owne workes. To these may be added our nature also very prone and ready by it self hereunto, and now brought into a custome, whereby it is confirmed, and in continuance of time turneth the heart also into exercise and use, so, that we cannot abstaine, nor think otherwise, but, that God will be favourable unto us, which have done so great workes, and have led our life so without blame or fault. Therefore we must strive against both our nature and custome, For surely it is a very hard thing to think or be perswaded otherwise, and so purely to put a difference between faith and love, the filth still hanging upon us and cleaving unto us, albeit we be now in faith, so that our heart can scarce rule it selfe, that it say not: so long time have I taught the Gospel, so have I lived, such great workes have I done, &c. And we would very willingly have God to regard our life, and turne his mercy seat for our cause into a iudgement seat. Thou mayest use this boasting toward men, I have done well to all as I have been able, and if anything be wanting, I as yet will endeavour to make a recompence. But if thou be minded to go unto God, I advise thee to cease from such arrogant boasting, & think to appeal from iudgment to grace:

Let who will begin and prove this thing, he shall as length see and trie how grievous and hard it is for a man that hath been occupied all his life time in the workes of his owne holynesse, to escape out, and with all his heart by faith to cleave to this one Mediator. I my selfe have now preached the Gospel almost twenty yeares, and have been exercised in the

the same dayly by reading and writing, so that I may well seeme to be rid of this wicked opinion. Notwithstanding I yet now and then feel the same old filth to cleave to my heart, where by it cometh to passe that I would willingly so have to doe with God, that I might bring something with my self, because of which he should for my holinesse sake give me his grace. And I can scarce be brought to commit my selfe with all confidence to mere grace, which I should doe: for we ought to flie only to the mercy seate, forasmuch as God hath set it before us for a Sanctuary, which must be the refuge of all them that shall be saved. Wherefore it is not to be marvelled at, if it be grievous unto others, so purely to apprehend and lay hold of faith: but especially to such as be yet hindered and entangled of devellish preachers, of whom *Paul* speaketh, which crie out against the doctrine of faith, and in these wordes urge the works of the Law, *doe this and thou shalt live*: Also, *If thou wilt enter into life, keepe the commandments* &c. Which indeed are true and right, if thou didst also rightly understand them. Declare unto me the true meaning, of these words, otherwise I know sufficiently already, that I ought to be righteous and keepe the comandements. But how must I attain herunto? or what is it to be righteous? If thou sayest that it is, to have a good conscience and a pure hearr, and to doe all things, that God hath commanded: Well, be it so, but heare yee then? go to, performe me that, or at least shew one, that dareth say that he hath performed it. For thou shalt not yet so purifie my heart and conscience with thy doctrine, that God cannot accuse and condemne me. But now the Law (as it hath been sufficiently declared) requireth such a heart, as hath a good conscience before God. How therefore doe we obtaine such a conscience? This is the question and the cause, whereof the controversie is. Truly it cometh not hereof, because thou teachest the judgement seate, that is, the Law, but from hence, for that we have a pure and unfained faith, which layeth hold of Christ, in whom it most fully obtaineth all things which the Law requireth. So at length all things are brought to passe in me having a good conscience, inasmuch as I am now made righteous and justified before God. For although that many things be as yet found wanting in me, yet he standeth on my side, who hath so much righteousness as wherewith he is able to supply both mine & all mens defects. Thus we shew the way whereby wee are made righteous before God, when as they, when they teach best of all, shew only the way to attain to honesty, and righteousness which is of force and value before men, contending that it ought to be of force before God also, mingling together all things in one, inasmuch as they have no certaine knowledge thereof, understanding nor what they say or what they affirme. For, to what end tendeth this thy immoderate cry? He that will enter into life, let him keepe the commandments, &c. in which wordes thou shalt

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not shew the way to attaine righteousness: for descend a litle into thy selfe, and examine thy selfe diligently, then shalt thou finde thy self to have bin in time past conceived and born in sins, and to live in the same now, and not able to perform that which the law requireth. Why therefore dost thou seduce other with vain words, saying? be thou righteous and thou shalt be saved, which is to no purpose, neither followeth there any fruit thereof, the way being not shewed by which we attaine to justification? I heare the words well, what things the law requireth, but how shall we attaine unto ability to fulfill them? Then speakest thou to me againe, and sayest, thou must doe good workes. But how shall I stand before the judgement of God, if I have long and much wrought good workes, and am righteous before men, as thou teachest me? How shall I be certaine, that I seeme such a one to God also? For here my heart and conscience be ready to witness the contrary against me. Howbeit I should have been thus taught of thee, as *Paul* commonly teacheth, that righteousness must proceed from faith unfeined, and before all things the mercy seat must be laid hold of, from whence all things that are wanting in us are to be taken. And so indeed these wordes, keep the commandements of God, are rightly to be understood. For the law requireth perfect righteousness in thee, being of force as well before God as before men: thou having obtained this, goe forth into the companie and assembly of men, and exercise love, and doe good workes. By this order and meanes, something is brought to passe, and such sayings of the Scripture are fulfilled. For so man doth that which the law requireth, first before God, not by his own strength or vertues, but by Christ, without whom we can doe nothing before God, and secondly by his owne endeavour before men. And he is now perfectly righteous, inwardly by faith in Christ, and outwardly also by his workes, yet so that there is no place among men for mutuall pardoning of offences. Therefore the righteousness of Christians doth much more consist in forgiving, then in their owne workes. Those vaine praters doe pervert the order of this doctrine, and without preaching of forgiveness, doe teach that workes onely are to be urged. Lo, thus *Saint Paul* reprehenderth the error and ignorance of them, which speak much of the law, and repeat it in daily sermons, and yet they themselves doe not understand or shew the way, how the law must be fulfilled, knowing nothing so well as to babble forth and often to repeat these words, that the Law, the commandements are to be kept, if thou wilt be saved, good workes must be done, &c. As they doe at this day, fill al books with such confusion of words, and in all sermons utter nothing else, then such vaine babling, which they themselves understand not. But they never say word of those things, whereof *Paul* here speaketh, namely of the sum of Christian do-



Grine, how love must flow out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfained, they say no more, but keepe the commandements. They levelling at the true marke do never hit it : therefore they corrupt and falsifie all things, love, the heart, the conscience, &c. For the head of the fountaine is wanting, that is, sincere faith, which if it be not right and sound, all things must needs be corrupt, which shal flow and proceed from it. And whatsoever they teach, it is a concert of their owne imagination, and like to delusions, not unlike also to those things, that are seen through a lattice or glasse, which resemble the colour of the cleare glasse, and yet indeed are not of that colour. They think that God will regard them, when they live so before men, as it seemeth good to their obscure opinion. But if God were of that opinion, he might then have well kept still Christ and the Gospel. For what need or necessity should move him, to send Christ from heaven, who should purchase that unto us with his precious blood, which wee our selves have before with us ? He surely should be the foolishhest of all men, which would poure forth a precious treasure, which no man needeth. Thus thou seest how these men teach their own dreames, whereof they themselves know or have tryed no certainty, neither doe any thing else but fill men with errors, being not able to declare, how that which they teach is to be attained unto. They draw men unto workes, whereby they confirme them in their old nature and custome, out of which they were to be drawn. These truly are grievous and odious men, and not unworthily very sharply accused and reprehended of *Paul* : and it appeareth that they were of no small authority and estimation, seeing that he pronounceth of them, that they were called and would be counted Doctors of the Law, and farre greater and worthier then the Apostles themselves. Wherefore we must endeavour to lay up and print this text even in the bottome of our heart: for it is excellently well ordered, and is pure and perfect doctrine, teaching how we must be righteous before God and men, as the Law requireth, that these three may be as it were conjoynd in us, namely, a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned : and that our life may flow out of all these, and be occupied and led in them : then have we attained, and fulfilled the meaning of the Law. Howbeit we must most diligently take heed, and endeavour to draw Christ unto the Law, who is the end and fulfilling of the Law, and our righteousness and fulnesse before God, which we find not in our selves, and without faith shall never find, albeit the Law be taught and often repeated without understanding and knowledge. And these things may suffice to have been spoken at this present for the exposition of this place.

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**The 16. Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, of the question of the Pharisees, and answer of Christ concerning giving tribute to Cesar.** [Mat. 22. verse 15. to the 22.] *Then went the Pharisees, &c.*

**I**N this text is set forth unto us, how subtil reason and mans wisdom agree with the wisdom of God, and how foulely reason stumbleth when it striveth to be even most subtil and wise, as it here falleth out with the Pharisees, who notwithstanding were the best and most wise of the Jewes, which even by this their subtiltie they declare: neverthelesse their wisdom is here proved to be foolishnesse. They could blame Christ neither for his preaching nor for his workes, and yet would they willingly have had occasion to put him to death, wherefore they thought to set upon him most craftily and wilely, propounding a subtil question unto him, the subtiltie whereof was such, that mans reason was not able to comprehend it, then which also a subtiller could not be invented: and thus they speake unto him: *Master we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God truly, neither carest for any man: for thou considerest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, how thinkest thou? Is it lawfull to give tribute unto Cesar or no?*

Here think they, we shall intrap him. For he shall be compelled to answer that tribute is either to be given or not to be given. If he affirme that it is to be given, we have overcome him: but if he deny that it is to be given, then is he guiltie of death. Whereas they say, *Master*, they will thereby moye him, and as it were constrain him to answer the truth. But whereas they say, *we know that thou art true*, they do thereby put him in mind of his dutie. Whether therefore should Christ turn himself? for there seemeth to be no way for him to escape, yet he would not for all that fall into their net. Was not this a subtil question? Doe they not shew themselves to have been sufficient, craftie, and wily ones? for which way soever the Lord had answered, he had been taken. Was not this done also full warely and circumspectly? for they associate to themselves the Ministers of Herod, thinking no other but to intrap him with deceit, that he should nor by any meanes escape, thus casting in their minds: *Now we will meet with him well enough, if he deny that tribute is to be given, the Herodians are present which shall forthwith put him to death as a seditious fellow, and one that resisteth the Roman Empire. But if he affirme that tribute is to be given, he speaketh against the libertie of the Jewes, then will we stirre up the people against him. For the Jewish people would be free, and have their King of their own stock, even as it was promised them both of Moses and God, that their kingdome should continue untill the time of the true King, that is, of Christ. Even as the Patriarch did prophesie thereof: The scepter shall not depart from Juda and a lawgiver from between his feet, untill Silo come. Gen. 49. 10. And therefore God*

did choose this people specially to himself, and made a kingdome of them, only for Christs cause. Moreover there were many sentences in the Scripture which declared that they should serve none, *For they should be the chiefest and not the lowest, &c. Deut. 28. 13.* This and such like sayings the Scribes had beaten into the peoples heads, wherewith they were greatly disturbed: even as at this day it is put into the peoples mind, that the Church cannot erre. Hereupon the Pharisees thought thus: If he affirme that tribute must be given, he blasphemeth God, he shall be guiltie of death, as one iniurious to God, and then shall be stoned of the people. For God hath granted and promised libertie unto this people, and they were all even in the midst of captivity the people of God. Howbeit at that time they wanted a King, as they doe at this day. Wherefore divers tumults, seditions, and uproares were stirred up among them. For they were taught by the law, that they should have a King of their own flesh and stock, as it is said before, wherefore they did uncessantly strive against strange Kings and governments, untill not a few of them at times were beaten and slain. Neither did this happen seldom times, for they were a stiffe necked, obstinate, and unruly Nation, and therefore the Romans which at that time did beare rule over them, did very circumspectly governe them, and divided the land into foure charges of government, that being on every side kept in awe by the Governors and Presidents, they might not so soone flock together and move sedition, and that they might also be more easily resisted if at any time they should rise against the Roman Empire. Wherefore Pilate was appointed of the Romans Lievtenant of Judea, Herod Tetrarch of Galile, his brother Philip Tetrarch of Iturea, and of the country of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the Tetrarch of Abilene, as Luke rehearseth them. And all this was done that they might keep the Jewes under, whereupon the Jewes were inflamed with anger, and in a rage and fury, but especially in the time of Christ they would willingly have a King. Wherefore the Pharises having found out this device, thought thus with themselves. Well, we have the matter now at a good stay. The Romans challenge to themselves the government, now if he answer unto the question that tribute is not to be given, the Lievtenant is at hand, and readie to put him to death: if he answer that it must be given, he shall stirre up the people against himself, and so we shall assuredly by this meanes intrap him: thus they supposed that either they should find cause of death in the Lord, or at the least make his doctrine to be nothing set by of the people. As the Jewes here doe, so also doe we, the chiefe and necessary things being left, we are occupied about other matters not necessarie. The Pharisees here move a question, whether they be free or otherwise: forasmuch as they had the Law and the word of God, they supposed that they

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ought to be subject to none, but to their own King, yet they were now compelled to obey Cesar Emperour of Rome. They had Scripture concerning the love of God and their neighbour, but that being left, they are occupied about other matters. It was promised unto them, if they obeyed the precepts and commandments of God, that they then should be a free people: they disobey and neglect Gods commandments, and yet notwithstanding they will be free, and have their own King. In like manner falleth it out with us, we earnestly challenge to our selves Christian libertie, and yet we think, that if we doe those things that seeme good in our own braine and fantasie, we are thereby Christians, both faith and charitie being of us neglected. But what doth Christ, the Pharisees so subtilly setting upon him? he striketh them with their own sword, and intrappeth them in their own devise, whereby they thought to have intrapped him, answering neither of those things which they hoped he would, as the Evangelist doth more at large describe, saying: *But Iesus perceived their wickednesse and said: Why tempt yee me, yee hypocrites? Shew me the tribute money. And they brought him a penny. And he said unto them: Whose is this image and superscription? they said unto him, Cessars.* Here thou plainly seest the wisdom and marvelous dexterity of Christ, he willet the tribute money to be shewed unto him, and asketh of the image and superscription thereof. They answering that it is Cessars, he very well and most freely inferreth, that they are under Cesar, unto whom they were compelled to pay tribute. As if he said: If yee have so let in Cesar, that his money is coyned with you, surely he beareth rule over you, as though he should say: *It is come to passe through your own fault that Cesar ruleth over you.* What should they say or doe unto this question? They marvelled and went their wayes, they thought that they should notably have overcome him, but for all their subtiltie and wisdom they were deceived. This is written for our comfort, that we which are Christians may know that we have such wisdom, as exceedeth all wisdom, such strength and righteousness, as whereunto no strength and righteousness of man is like. For against the holy Ghost there is no counsell: this power and strength we obtaine through Christ, that we may tread sinne underfoot, and triumph over death. When Christ dwelleth in us by faith, we have him which bringeth to passe such things, howbeit they are not thoroughly felt but in time of temptation. Wherefore when I stand in need, he is present, and giveth unto me strength, that I may courageously passe through. We must not therefore be afraid that our doctrine shall perish and be put to ignominie and shame. For let all the wise men of the world rise against the word of God, yea and be never so circumspect, and let themselves against it, yet shall they have the foyle and be overcome. It may

he that they bark and bite, so that it seemeth unto men, as though they would destroy the Gospel, but when they have set themselves against it to extinguish it, they shall no whit prevaile, but in the snare that they have laid for others, they themselves shall at length be taken. As we see here in this Text, and commonly in *Paul*, but specially in the history of *St. Steven*, where we read how vainly his adversaries used the Scriptures, yea those that they used were against themselves. For the Jewes did accuse *Steven*, that he had spoken both against the temple, and against God which commanded the temple to be builded, bringing and alleading Scriptures, whereby they thought to convince and condemne him. But *Steven* being full of the Holy Ghost, shewed them in order out of the Scripture, how that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands: *David* would have built him a house, but God refused it. What was the cause hercof? A longtime before *David* was borne, God, dwelt among his people. He surely should be a miserable God which should need a house, & so he confirmeth by many histories that God doth not dwell in houses or temples made with hands. What should the Jewes doe here? they did manifestly acknowledge their own Scripture, which they had brought against *Steven*. So all they shall be put to shame and overthrow, which set themselves against the wisdom and word of God. Wherefore let no man be afraid, albeit all the wisdom and power of the world strive against the Gospel, although it would extinguish it even by shedding of blood. For the more blood that is shed, so much more is the number of Christians increased. The blood of Christians saith *Tertullian*, is seed whereof Christians grow. Satan must be drowned in the blood of Christians. Wherefore it is not violence and force that is able to suppress the Gospel: for it is like unto a palme tree, which hath this nature and qualitie, that albeit a weight be laid upon it, yet it alwayes riseth and lifeth up it selfe against the weight. Such a nature also hath the Gospel, for the more it is striven against, so much the more are the roots thereof spread abroad, and the more mightily that it is oppressed, by so much doth it more and more grow and increase. Wherefore there is no cause that we should be afraid of power, but rather that we should feare prosperitie and merrie dayes, which are able to hurt us more then anguish and persecution. Neither let us be afraid of the subtiltie and wisdom of the world, for they cannot hurt us, yea the more that they strive against the truth, so much more pure and cleare is the truth made. Nothing therefore can come better to the Gospel, then when the world with his force and wisdom setteth it selfe against it. The more vehemently sinne and Satan doe fight against my conscience, the more stronger is my righteousness made. For if sinnes doe urge and disquiet me, I doe then more ardently pray and cry unto God, and so my faith

is more and more increased and strengthened. This is that which St. Paul meaneth when he saith: *Power is made perfect through weaknesse.* 2 Cor. 12. 9. Forasmuch therefore as we have so great a treasure, which is increased and strengthened by persecutions and aduersitie, there is no cause that we should be afraid, but rather that we should with a cheerful mind rejoyce in tribulation, as St. Paul saith Rom. 5. according as the Apostles did, who with great joy departing from the councell, gave God thanks, that they were counted worthy to suffer rebuke for the name of Iesus. *Act. 5. 41.* If the diuel were endued with such wisdom, that he would be quiet, and suffer the Gospell to have free course, he should not suffer so much losse. For when the Gospell is not impugned, it is as it were wasted with rust, neither hath it occasion to shew forth the vertue and power thereof. We live therefore here secure as yet, for no man striveth against us, wherefore we continue still as we were before, yea (alas) we become worse and worse. Whereas some of our aduersaries have set upon us by writing, that pertaineth to a few. Forasmuch as they have written against us, they have thereby done nothing else, but as it were blown the fire, but if we had been thrown into the fire, or flaine with the sword, the number of Christians would be greater among us. Wherefore this is a comfort unto us, if we at any time be tempted that Christ is ready to help us, and reigneth among us, yea he is so neere unto us, that alwayes through him we may overcome, as long as we beleeve and trust in him: Howbeit when we are touched with no aduersitie, he doth little or nothing, but when we are sought against and oppressed, he is present, and bringeth all our enemies to confusion. We have moreover to learne here that they which are wise and mightier then other, which are endued with the chiefe gifts of understanding and nature more then other, which excell in greater industrie, learning, and readier capacitie then other, which are fit to oversee other, and can governe all things best, that they I say doe many times most of all other resist God and faith, and trust more to their own strength and reason then to God. For they are carried so farre by their venomous nature, that they neither can nor will use those things to the commoditie and profit of their neighbour: but trusting to their own gifts and abilitie, they hope that now they shall obtaine this, now that, neither doe they think that they shall have need of Gods help also thereunto: As it appeareth here in the Pharisees and Scribes, who were certaine, as they supposed, that if they so set upon the Lord, it could not be, but that they should then inangle him. For it is impossible, thought they, that he should here escape us, we shall here hold him as it were fast into a net, whether he affirme or deny that tribute must be given. Marke moreover how subtle and perverse the wit of mans nature is, which is here very lively set forth.

There is nothing else in man but wickednesse, delusion, guile, deceits, lying, fraud, and all kind of evill, yea of nature man is but lyes and vanitie, as the 116. *Psalme* saith. We must not trust any man in any thing, doe not perswade thy self, that any man speaketh the truth unto thee, for whatsoever man speaketh is a lye. Why so? The fountaine or spring head, that is, the heart is not sincere, wherefore neither can the rivers be pure. And for this cause the Lord doth commonly call men the generation of vipers and a brood of Serpents. Is not this a goodly title of man? Let any man now goe, and glorie of his own righteousnesse, strength, or free will. Before the world indeed some man may be, and gloriously appeare godly, righteous, and holy, but there is nothing else, but a generation of vipers, and brood of serpents, but that especially in those that seem most excellent, most precious, most wise, and of greatest understanding. If thou go through even all the histories of the Greeks, Jewes, and Romans, thou shalt find the best and wisest Princes of all, which have governed the affaires of their Empire prosperously, thou shalt find them I say to have thought nothing of God, but only trusting to themselves, to have acknowledged nothing as received from God. Hereupon it is gathered, that the lesse a man excelleth in wisdom before the world, so much lesse doth he commit against God. For they that excell in counsell and authoritie before the sight of the world, doe for the most part deceive and lye more then others, thinking that if they deale by delusions and deceit, their fraud and iniquitie is not perceived: for they can after a prettie sort cloak their craft and subtiltie. But the holy Ghost hath a most cleare and bright sight, which they cannot avoid, but they shall be espied. The Scripture doth oftentimes call such, Lyons, wolves, beares, swine, and cruell beasts, in as much as they rage, and devoure and consume all things with their fraude and deceit. Wherefore in the old testament the Jewes were forbidden to eate of certain beasts, as of those already rehearsed, and of others, for this one cause especially, that it should be a type and example to us, whereby we might perceive, that there are some men, which are strong, mighty, rich, witty, learned, skilfull, and wise, which are to be avoided and eschewed as a certain unclean thing, and as such as seduce and deceive others with their faire shew, might, and wisdom. For neither shall they be counted for such, neither will any man think them to be such, as do so much as think any evill in their heart much lesse do it. Wherefore thou must put no trust and confidence in any man, trust not unto him, for he will deceive thee wherein soever he is able. Again if thou trustest man, thou art against God, in whom thou puttest not thy trust. It is written in the 17. chap. of *Jer.* *Cursed be the man that putteth his trust in man, and, Blessed is he man that putteth his trust in the Lord.*

Some man may now say : How shall we doe then ? One man must haue dealing with an other, otherwise how can the life of men continue ? We must buy, wee must sell, we must utter and change our wares with men : Now if one should not trust another, the whole trade of mans affaires should be in perill, yea and perish. I say that no man can deny, but that there must be mutuall dealings among men, and that one doth need the helpe and travel of another. But this I will haue, that whatsoever dealing thou hast with men, either in buying or selling, thou count it for a thing uncertain, which thou must neither trust, nor build upon, for it is certaine, for as soone as thou shalt trust to man, he will seeke to deceive thee, forasmuch as the nature of man, as it is of it selfe, can doe nothing but lye and deceive. Yea all things in man are uncertaine, both his workes and wordes, there is nothing in him, but lightnesse and unconstancy, which thou mayest bold'y believe to be true. Wherefore all our hope and confidence must be reposed in God alone, and after this sort wee must say, Lord give thou me grace that I may direct and order my life, my soule, my body, my substance & goods, and whatsoever is mine, according to thy divin wil, for I believe in thee, I trust in thee, do not thou forsake me in so perillous dealing with this or that man : I put no trust in man. If thou knowest that it is good for me, make him to deale faithfully with me, if thou knowest that it will be to my hindrance and hurt, helpe me to avoid it, for thy will only pleaseth me, which I wish alwayes to be done. As soone as thou thinkest in thy minde : He is a good man, and one that will keepe his promise, I am sure that he wil not deceive me, but wil deale faithfully, even then hast thou fallen from God, and worshiped an Idol, putting thy trust in a lyar. Wherefore when thou hast any dealing with man, think boldly : If he deale faithfully it is well, if he doe otherwise, in the name of God, let him goe, I will commit all things to the will of God, he shall prosperously bring them to passe. Of such a false and ungodly confidence reposed in men, that evill crept in among Christians, namely the worshiping of Saints, whereby the Christian Church, that is, the true congregation of the faithfull, hath suffered exceeding great hurt, and incomparable ruine. For what other was the service and worshiping of Saints but a Divellish thing ? When as men used to reason after this sort : This man was very holy, that which he taught, he did, whom we will follow, and doe the like, *Hicrome, Augustine, Gregory* said this, therefore it is true, and therefore will I beleeve it. *Francis, Benedict, Dominick, Bartholomew*, lived thus, they did this and that, I will imitate their life and workes. Moreover *Augustine* was saved by this rule, wherefore I also shall be saved by it, *Eg*, how unstable and miserable a thing is this, they are only lyes and dreames of men, there is not in one word mention made here of Christ  
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and his word, but they are only the vain inventions and trifles of men. I would utterly breake the rule of *Augustine*, if he therefore ordained it, thinking to be saved thereby. So blinde and without understanding is reason, that it receiveth the dotages, and vain inventions of men, when as notwithstanding the word of God only is to be received in matters of salvation, as if *Herod*, *Pilate*, *Caiphas*, and *Hannas* should preach the Gospell, I ought to receive it. Againe, if those that are counted holy, should rise and preach lyes, also rules, habits, shavings, ceremonies, and such like vaine inventions of men, I ought in no wise to receive them, for we must here have respect, not to the persons, but to that which they preach. Doeſt thou presume to be wiser then all the Fathers and Saints, then all the Bishops and Princes of the whole world? Thus may some object against me. Far be that from me. For I doe not contend to be wiser then they. But this without controversie is thus, that whatsoever is wise, great, liberall, mighty and strong before the world, doth seldome or never agree with the word of God. For so it falleth out, that they that are such doe for the most part persecute the Gospell, and if they were not so great, the Gospell should not so greatly shine forth and triumph. The Romane Emperours *Hadrian*, *Trajan*, *Diocletian* were the most wise *Cesars* of all, whose government was soliked of, that it was praised of the whole world, yet they persecuted the Gospell, and could not abide the truth. The same we finde written of the Kings of the Jewes, as of *Achas* and others, which governed their Kingdome very well, yet despised the word of God and disobeyed his commandements. We in our time had never such Emperours or Princes, as are comparable to them. But it ought to be verified in these, that God would by foolish preaching confound the wisdom of this world, as *Paul* saith 1. Cor. 1. All these things are shewed unto us in this text, which we have in hand, which hath a simple and slender shew and appearance of it selfe, but it containeth many things in it most worthy the noting. Now how the Lord concludeth with the Pharises, when they had shewed him the tribute money, and had answered that it was *Cesars* image and superscription, the Evangelist declareth: saying: Give therefore unto *Cesar* the things that are *Cesars*, and give unto God those things which are Gods. Although they had deserved no such thing of the Lord, neverthelesse he teacheth them the right way. And in these words he confirmeth the sword and office of the Magistrate: they hoped that he would condemne and resist him, but he doth nothing lesse: for he commendeth and praiseth him, commanding that they give unto him those things that are his. Whereby he plainly will have, that there be Magistrates, Princes, & Rulers under whose Government we must live. Neither must we care whether they use and exercise their rule and authority well or ill, wee must have

haue regard only to their power and office, for their power and authority is good inasmuch as it is ordained & instituted of God. Neither is there any cause why thou shouldest find fault with power, if at any time thou be oppressed by Princes and Tyrantes: for whereas they abuse the power given unto them of God, they shall surely be compelled to give an account thereof. The abuse of a thing doth not make that thing euill, which is in it selfe good. A chain of gold is good, neither is it therfore made worse, for that a Harlot weareth it about her neck, or if one should put out mine eye with it, should I finde fault in the chain therfore? In like manner the power of the Prince must be borne, for if he abuse his office, he is not to be counted of me as no Prince, neither belongeth it to me to revenge or punish it in him. I must obey him for Gods cause only, for he representeth the place of God. How grievous things soever Magistrates shall exact, I must for God his cause bare them all, and obey them, so far as they be not contrary to Gods commandements. If they do justly or unjustly, it shall in due time appeare. Wherefore if thy substance, life and body, and whatsoeuer thou hast should be taken from thee by the Magistrates, thou maist say thus: I willingly yeeld them unto you, and acknowledge you for rulers over me, I will obey you, but whether you use your power, and authority well or ill see you to that. Moreover whereas Christ saith: *Give unto Cesar the things that are Cesars, and unto God those things that are Gods.* We must understand that unto God pertaineth honour, we must acknowledge him for the living, omnipotent and wise God, & ascrib unto him what good thing soever can be named. And albeit we do not give him this honour, he notwithstanding easily keepeth it, for nothing is either added to, or taken from him by our honouring. Howbeit in us he is true, omnipotent, and wise, when as we count him so, and believe that he is such a one, as he suffereth himselfe to be said to be. Now unto Cesar and the Magistrate feare, custome, tribute, obedience &c. are due. God requireth especially the heart, the Magistrate the body and goods, over which he executeth his office in the place of God, which S. Paul doth most notably in plaine and manifest wordes declare, *Rom. 13. Let every soule be subiect unto the higher powers: for there is no power but of God: and the powers that be, are ordained of God. Who so ever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist, shall receive to themselves condemnation. For Magistrates are not to be feared for good workes, but for euill. Wilt thou then be without feare of the power? doe well: so shalt thou haue praise of the same. For he is the Minister of God for thy wealth, but if thou doe euill, feare: For he beareth not the sword for nought: for he is the minister of God to take vengeance on him that doth euill. Wherefore ye must be subiect, not because of wrath onely, but also for conscience*

conscience sake. For, for this cause ye pay also tribute : for they are Gods ministers, applying themselves for the same things. Give to all men therefore their duty, tribute to whom you owe tribute, custome, to whom custome : feare, to whom feare : honour, to whom ye owe honour. And therefore also are Magistrates ordained of God, that they may defend and maintaine publick peace, which alone exceedeth all worldly good things : we felt a litle in the last commotion of the common people, what loss, miserie, calamity and grievous sorrow, conspiracie and sedition bringeth in the world. God grant that it may so continue, that we try it no more. Thus much shall suffice to have been spoken for the exposition of this text. **A Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, teaching that saluation cometh by Christ alone.** [Iohn 6.

verse 44. to the 51.] No man can come to me, &c.

[The summe of this text]

1. Christ is knowne of none but of him whom the Father draweth, that is, except the Father teach us that knowledge inwardly in the heart. Therefore Christ saith unto Peter. *Matth. 16.* Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. 2. Christ is the wisdom of God which is of more price then precious stones, and whatsoever can be wished, is not to be compared unto it, as Salomon saith in the Proverbs. 8. 1 1. 3. The old heavenly bread, that is the righteousness of the law doth not justify: But Christ if we believe in him, justifieth forever.

[The exposition of the text]

**T**His text teacheth us nothing else but Christian faith, and stirreth it up in us as surely Iohn through his Gospel, doth almost no other thing but instruct us, how we must beleeve in the Lord Christ. And such a faith as is grounded on the true promise of God made unto us in Christ, shall save us as this text plainly declareth. Also they are here all proved fools, which have taught us another way and meanes to obtaine righteousness. Whatsoever mans minde can invent, although it be holy, although it have a faire shew before men, it must needs utterly fall, if that he will have salvation to come thereby. For albeit that man is exercised with the duties of Godlinesse, he shall not be able to attaine unto heaven, unles God prevent him with his word, which may offer his divine grace unto him, and lighten his heart, that he may walke in the right way. Now this way is the Lord Jesus Christ, he that will seeke another way, as the most part of men with their outward workes commonly doe, hath now erred from the right and high way. For Paul saith *Gal. 2.* If righteousness be by the law, that is, by the workes of the law, then Christ died without a cause. Therefore I say, that a man must by the Gospel be as it were brused and broken, and humbled even from the bottome of his heart, as being fraile and weake, which can move neither hands nor feet, but only lyeth prostrate

strate and cryeth: Help me O omnipotent God, mercifull Father, I am not able to help my selfe: Help O Lord Christ, mine owne help is nothing. That so against this corner stone which is Christ all may be broken, as he saith of himselfe, in *Luke*, 20. 17. when he asked the Pharisees and Scribes: *What meaneth this then that is written: The stone that the builders refused, that is made the head of the corner? Whosoever shall fall upon that stone, shall be broken: and on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grinde him to powder.* Wherefore either let us fall upon it by our imbecillitie and weaknesse, by denying our selves, and so be broken, or else he will breake us for ever in his straight judgement. But it is better that we fall upon it, then that it fall upon us. Upon this foundation Christ saith in this text. *No man can come unto me, except the father which hath sent me, draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.* Now he whom the Father draweth not, shall surely perish. It is also concluded that he which cometh not to this sonne, shall be damned for ever. He is the onely Sonne given unto us, which may save us, without him there is no salvation: if he help not, our case is most miserable: Of him Peter also speaketh, to the same effect in the *Acts* of the Apostles, chap. 4. *This is the stone cast aside of you builders, which is become the head of the corner, neither is there salvation in any other, for among men there is given none other name under heaven, whereby we must be saved.* Whether would our Divins & Schoolmen turn themselves here, which have taught us that by many workes we must attaine unto righteousness? Here is that high master Aristotle confounded, who hath, taught us, that reason endeavoureth to doe the best things and is alwayes ready to the better. But this Christ doth here deny; for unless the Father possesse and draw us, we shall perish for ever. Here all men must confesse their imbecillity and slownes to good things. If so be that any perswade himselfe that he is able to doe any good thing by his owne strength, truly he hath reproved Christ of falshood, and with great arrogancy presumeth to come to heaven, albeit he is not drawne of the Father. Wherefore where the word of God is in his course, and soundly preached, whatsoever things are high and great, it casteth them downe, it maketh all mountaines even with the vallies, and overthroweth all hills, as the Prophet *Esay* saith, that all hearts hearing the word may despaire of themselves, otherwise they cannot come unto Christ. The workes of God are such, that while they kill, they make alive, while they condemne, they save: as Hanna the mother of Samuell singeth of the Lord, *The Lord killeth, and maketh alive, bringeth downe to the grave, and seteth up againe. The Lord maketh poore, and maketh rich, bringeth low, and heareth up one high.* Wherefore if a man, be thus stricken of God in his heart, that he acknowledgeth himselfe such a one as ought for his sinnes to be condemned

ned, he surely is even that very man, whom God by his word hath stricken, and by this stroake hath fastned upon him the bond of his diuine grace, whereby he draweth him, that he may provide for his soule, and haue care of him. He could first find with himselfe no help nor counsell, neither did he wish for any, but now he hath found the speciall consolation and promise of God, which is after this sort: *He that asketh receiveth, he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it is opened.* By such a promise man is more and more lifted up in minde, and conceiveth a greater trust and confidence in God. For as soone as he heareth that this is the worke of God alone, he desireth of God, as at the hand of his mercifull father, that he will vouchsafe to draw him. If so be that he be drawne of God unto Christ, undoubtedly that also shall come unto him, whereof the Lord maketh mention here, namely that he will raise him up at the last day. For he layeth hold on the word of God, and trusteth in God, whereby he hath a certaine testimony, that he is he whom God hath drawne: as Iohn saith in his first Epistle Iohn 5. 10, *He that beleeueth in that Sonne of God hath the witness in himselfe.* Hereupon it must needs follow, that he is taught of God, and in verity now knoweth God to be no other, but a helper, a comforter, and a Saviour. Hereby is it now manifest, that if we beleeue, God will be no other towards us but a Saviour, helper, and giuer of all felicitie, who requireth and asketh nothing of us, but will only give and offer unto us, as he himselfe saith unto Israel, Psal. 81. *I am God thy Lord, which brought thee out of the land of Ægypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.* Who would not love such a God, which sheweth himselfe gentle and loving unto us, and offereth so readily his grace and goodnesse? They shall not be able to escape the severe and eternall judgement of God, which doe unadvisedly neglect so great grace, as the Epistle to the Hebrewes saith: If they that transgressed the law of Moses, escaped not unpunished, but dyed without mercy, how much more grievously shall God punish them, which count the blood of the testament as an unholy thing, and tread under foot the sonne of God? O how diligent is Paul in all his Epistles to teach how the knowledge of God may rightly be conceived? O how often doth he wish increase in the knowledge of God? as if he would say: If yee only knew and understood what God is, ye shoulde then be safe: Then ye would love him, and doe all things that are approved of him. Thus he saith Colos. 1. *we cease not to pray for you and to desire that yee might be fulfilled with knowledge of his will, in all wisdom, and spirituall understanding, that ye might walk worthy of the Lord and please him in all things, being fruitful in all good works, and increasing in the knowledge of God, strengthened with all might through his glorious power, unto all patience, and long suffering with ioyfulness: giving thanks*

thanks unto the father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light. And Psal. 119. David saith: *Instruct me, and I will keep thy law, yea I will observe it with my whole heart.* And thus ye have out of the first sentence of this text, that the knowledge of God doth come from the father, It is needfull that he lay the first stone in our building, otherwise we shall labour in vaine. But that is done thus: God sendeth unto us Preachers whom he hath taught, and provideth that his will be preached unto us. First that all our life and condition, although it have a faire shew and be holy outwardly, is of no esteemation before him, yea is abhorred and loathed of him. And this is called the preaching of the law, Afterward he maketh grace to be preached unto us, to wit, that he will not have us utterly condemned and cast of, but that he will receive us in his beloved sonne, and not simply receive us, but also makes us heires in his kingdom, yea and Lords over all things which are in heaven and earth. This now is called the preaching of grace or of the Gospel. And all this is of God, which raiseth up and sendeth forth preachers. This St. Paul signifieth when he saith thus Rom. 10. *Faith is by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* This also the words of the Lord meane here in the Gospel, when he saith. *It is written in the Prophets: And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. Not that any man hath seen the father save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.* When as we heare the first preaching, that is the preaching of the law, how we are condemned with all our workes, then man sigheth unto God and knoweth not what to doe, his conscience is evill and fearfull, and except helpe should come in time, he should despaire forever. Wherefore the other preaching must not be long deferred, the Gospel must be preached unto him, and the way unto Christ must be shewed, whom God hath given unto us a Mediatour, that through him alone wee may be saved, by meere grace and mercy, without all our owne workes and meritts. Then the heart is made joyfull, and hasteth unto such grace, as the thirsty heart runneth unto the water. David had a notable feeling hereof, when he said thus. *Psal. 14. Like as the heart desireth the water brookes, so longeth my soule after thee, O God: my soule thirsteth for God, yea even for the living God.* When therefore a man cometh to Christ, through the Gospel, then heareth he the voyce of the Lord Christ, which strengtheneth the knowledge that God hath taught him: to wit, that God is nothing else but a Saviour abounding with grace, who will be favourable and mercifull to all them, which call upon him in his Sonne. Therefore the Lord saith moreover: *Verely, verely I say unto you, he that beleeveth in me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your Fathers did*  
eat

eate Manna in the Wilderness, and are dead. This is that bread  
 which cometh downe from heauen, that he which eateth of it should  
 not die. I am that living bread, which came downe from heauen: if any  
 man eate of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will  
 give, is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. In these  
 wordes the soule findeth a table daintily furnished, whereby it may slake  
 al hunger. For it knoweth assuredly that he that speaketh these words  
 cannot lye. Wherefore if it commit it selfe confidently unto him and  
 cleave to the word, it resteth upon him, and so departeth not from this  
 goodly table. This is that supper, to the preparing whereof the hea-  
 venly Father killed his oxen and farlings, and hath bidden us al unto it.  
 The living bread whereof the Lord here maketh mention, is Christ  
 himselfe, whereby we are so fed. If we lay hold but of a morcell of  
 this bread in our hearts, and keepe it, we shall be satisfied for ever, nei-  
 ther can we ever be pluckt from God. Moreovert such an eating is  
 nothing else, but to believe in the Lord Christ, that he is made unto  
 us of God as Paul saith 1. Cor. 1. wisdom, righteousness, sanctifi-  
 cation, and redemption. He that eateth this meate liveth for ever.  
 Wherefore by and by after this text, when the Jewes were at contenti-  
 on about these his wordes, he saith: *Verily, verily I say unto you, Ex-  
 cept ye eate the flesh of the sonne of man and drinke his blood, ye have no  
 life in you. Whosoever eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eter-  
 nall life, and I will raise him up at the last day.* Manna which the Fathers  
 did eate in the desert (as Christ here saith) could not save from death,  
 but this bread maketh us immortall. If we believe in Christ death shal  
 not hurt us any thing at all, yea there is no more death. This the Lord  
 meaneth by these words in another place, where he saith to the Jewes:  
*Verily, verily I say unto you if a man keepe my word, he shall never see  
 death: Ioh. 8. 51.* where it is certain that he speaketh of the word of faith  
 and of the Gospell. But some man may say that the holie dye notwithstanding,  
 for Abraham and the holy Prophets are dead, as the Jewes said  
 unto him, I answer: The death of Christians is only a sleepe, as the  
 Scripture also commonly calleth it: For a Christian tasteth and fe-  
 leth no death, that is, he hath the feeling of no death. For this Savi-  
 our Christ Jesus, in whom he believeth, hath overcome death, that  
 afterwards he should not feele or tast it, but death is unto him only  
 a passage and gate to life, as Christ himselfe witnesseth, *Iohn 5. Veri-  
 ly, verily I say unto you: that heareth my word, and believeth in him  
 that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation,  
 but hath passed from death to life.* Wherefore the life of a Christian is  
 merie, and on every side replenished with joy, and the yoke of Christ  
 easie and sweet. But that it seemeth heavie and grievous unto us, this  
 is the cause, for that the Father hath not yet drawne us: here upon it

commeth to passe that we take no pleasure thereof, neither is the Gospel comfortable unto us. If so be that we would lay up the words of Christ well in our heart, they would be unto us an exceeding comfort. And thus ye have heard how we must feed on this bread which came down from heaven, that is, on the Lord Christ, to wit, by faith, which we then doe when we beleve in him, that he is our Saviour. The whole chapter out of which this text is taken, commendeth unto us nothing else but spirituall meat. For when the multitude followed Christ, that they might againe eate and drink, which the Lord himself signifieth, he taketh occasion of the corporall meat which they foughr, and almost through the whole chapter speaketh of spirituall meat, as he said: *The words which I speak are spirit and life.* Whereby he would signifie, that he therefore fed them, that they should believe in him: and as they did eate the bodily meat, so they ought also to feed of the spirituall. Here let us weigh and mark this, that the Lord doth so gently and graciously apply himself to us, and offer himself in such gentle words, that it ought worthily to move our hearts to believe in him, to wit, that that bread, was therefore given for us, in as much as it was behovefull that he should tast death and suffer hellish paines: Also should beare sinnes which he never had committed, as though he had committed them, and had been his own: and he did also the same willingly for our sakes, and took us as brethren and sisters. This if we beleve, we doe the will of the heavenly father, which is nothing else but to believe in his Sonne, and so be saved. As Christ himself saith a litle before: *This is the will of him that sent me, that every man that seeth the Sonne, and belevereth in him, should have everlasting life.* It now therefore appeareth that he that hath faith doth the will of God, and eateth of this heavenly bread. As *Augustine* saith: What dost thou prepare thy mouth? believe; and thou hast eaten. Of this spirituall supper the whole new Testament speaketh, but especially in this place of *Iohn*. The Sacrament of Christs body and blood is a certaine testimonie and pledge of this true supper, whereby we ought to strengthen our faith, and to be assured, that this body and this blood, whereof we feed in the Sacrament, delivereth us from sinne, death, Satan, and all evill. But how may a man perceive and know, that he also doth pertaine to this heavenly bread, and is called to this spirituall supper? let him consider the case in his own heart, which if he find so affected, that he doth as it were feeles the sweetnesse in the promise of God, and is undoubtedly perswaded, that he is of the company of them which pertaine to this supper, he is assuredly such a one indeed. For as we beleve, so commeth it unto us. Such a man hath also by and by a regard of his neighbour, and helpeth him as his brother, careth for him, giveth unto him, leadeh him, comforteth him, briefly doth no other.



wile to him then he desireth to be done unto himself. And all this proceedeth from hence, for that the bountifullnes and goodnesse of Christ hath replenished his heart with sweetnesse and love, that it is a pleasure and joy unto him to doe good to his neighbour, yea and he is grieved if there be none toward; whom he may be serviceable. And beside all this, he is tractable and lowly towards all men, he doth not esteeme the temporall pleasure and pride of life, he judgeth no man, he deserveth no man, he interpreteth all things in the better part. When as he seeth that the matter goeth not well with his neighbour, as that hee fainteth in faith, waxeth cold in love, and that his life is not on every side approvable, he prayeth for him, and is sore grieved if any commit any thing against God and his neighbour. In a summe, the root and sap are sound, for they are in a flourishing vine, to wit, Christ, and therefore such fruits come forth. But if any be void of faith, and not taught of God, such a one doth not feed on this heavenly bread, neither bringeth forth these fruits, for where a right faith is not, there such fruits are alwayes wanting. And therefore *St. Peter* teacheth us to make our calling unto salvation, sure by good workes; where he speaketh properly of the works of love, namely, that we doe good to our neighbour, and be affected toward him, as toward our own flesh and blood. Thus much shall suffice concerning this text. Let us call to God for his grace.

**The 18. Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, concerning good workes the fruits of faith.** *Rom. 13 Verse 11. to the 14. This also we know the season, how that it is time that we, &c.*

**T**He Apostle in this text teacheth, not of faith, but of workes the fruits of faith, shewing how the life of a Christian ought to be ordered and framed according to the flesh outwardly among men. For how we must live in the spirit and before God, faith doth teach, whereof *Paul* a little before this place hath at large and even Apostolically entreated. Yea if we consider this text well, it doth not so much teach as provoke, exhort, move, and stirre up them which are already taught, what they must doe. For *Paul* divideth the office of preaching into two parts, into doctrine and exhortation. *Rom. 12.* Doctrine is, when one teacheth that which was not known before, whereby men are instructed and come to understanding. Exhortation is, when the preacher moveth and provoketh unto that which is already known, either is necessary to be done of him, who will Christianly perform the duty of preaching. Wherefore *Paul* doth very earnestly apply himself to both, and that his exhortation may be more effectuell, and may more acceptably enter into the minds of them whom he hath purposed to exhort, he useth certaine elegant and figurative speeches, and doth with an adorned manner of speaking allure their minds unto him. For the words, sleep, darknesse, light, waking, armour, workes, the day, the night

night, which he here useth, are all spoken figuratively, by which other things are signified, then their nature and propriety doe beare : for he speaketh not of the naturall night, day, darknesse, armour, waking sleep, &c but he resembleth by these naturall things a certaine likeness to our mind, whereby he may more forceably provoke and bring us to those spirituall things. As it he said, ye see how men to get the riches of the present time, which doe soon perish, rise early, and laying aside the works of darknesse, apply themselves to the workes of the day, after the night is passed, and the day is come : with how much greater diligence ought we, shaking of our sleep, to rise early, and casting away the works which we did while it was yet dark, to apply our selves now to those works which are agreeable to our light, forasmuch as the night is now passed, and the day of our saluation hath appeared?

By sleep he signifieth evill workes which are void of faith : for sleep is a worke properly meet for the night, and that he meaneth thus, he sufficiently declareth, when he by and by after addeth : *Let us cast away the works of darknesse.* So contrariwise, to wake and to rise signifie good workes which come of faith. For as sleep pertaineth properly to the night, so to rise is properly agreeable to the morning and day. Whereupon it is said. 1 Thes. 5. *Beloved brethren, ye are not in darknesse, but yete are all the children of light and of the day : we are not of the night, neither of darknesse, wherefore let us not sleep as doe other, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night, and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night. But let us which are of the day, be sober, putting on the brest plate of faith and love, and hope of saluation for an helmet. For God hath not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtaine saluation by the meanes of our Lord Iesus Christ, which dyed for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.* It is sufficiently manifest, that the Apostle doth not in these words, forbid us the sleep of nature, neverthelesse he draweth a similitude from naturall sleep and waking, to spirituall, that is, to a good and evill life. And to be brieve, to rise out of sleep is here the very same thing that the Apostle writeth, Titus 2. *That grace of God, that bringeth saluation unto all men, hath appeared, and teacheth us that we should deny ungodlynnesse and worldly lusts, and that we should live soberly and righteously, and godly in this present world : looking for that blessed hope and appearing of the glory of that mighty God, and of our Saviour Iesus Christ.* For that which he calleth in these words, to deny ungodlynnesse and worldly lusts, he calleth in this text which we have in hand, to arise from sleep, and that which he termeth to live soberly, and righteously, and godly, that he calleth in our present text, to watch, and to put on the Armour of light, and whereas he saith : the grace of God that bringeth saluation, hath appeared, that he calleth

here the day & light, of which we wil hereafter speak more at larg. Now let us see what likenes there is between natural & spirituall sleep. He that sleepeeth naturally, neither seeth, nor feeleth any of those good things that are in the world, but lyeth among those things which are even next adioyning unto him as it were dead, serving to no use, neither regarding any thing at all. Foralbeit he live in himself, yet is he as dead to all other. Again, in stead of true things, he is in dreams wholly occupied with vain images & forms of things, which appear true, & is so foolish that he imbraceth those vain forms, & thinketh them to be true things. But when he waketh, those images do together vanish away, & the man beginneth to be occupied with true things. After the same manner almost it is, when one is as it were swallowed up of ungodlines, for he sleepeeth & is like a dead man before God, neither seeth he, neither feeleth any of the good things, which are good things indeed namely, those spiritual good things, which are promised & offered him by the Gospel, albeit they be just by him. For those things are seen and felt by faith alone, otherwise they are removed from al sight & feeling. Wherefore so long as by reason of the sleep of his unbelief, he can have neither any regard or sense of true good things, which are very neer him through the Gospel, he busieth himself with the fals good things of this world, as riches, promotions, & pleasures, which being compared unto eternal life, unto heavenly joy, and that perfect salvation which commeth to the godly, are altogether as dreams, & as those vain visions, compared to naturall things, wherof they are only representations. But when a man awaketh, & hath received faith, all regard & desire of those fals good things of this present life vanisheth away, & he acknowledgeth that they are nothing else but meer vanity & falshood, even as those visions do fade away quite as soon as a man awaketh out of a natural sleep. Hereof the 76. Psalm speaketh. *They have slept their sleep, and they whose hands were mighty, have found nothing.* And Psal. 73. *Like as a dream when one awaketh, so shalt thou make their image to vanish out of the City.* And Elay 29 *As when a hungry man dreameth that he is eating, and yet when he awaketh his soule is empty: or as when a thirstie man dreameth that he is drinking, and when he awaketh he is yet faint, and his soul hath appetite: even so shall the multitude of all nations be, that fighteth against mount Sion.* See how contemptuously and disdainfully the Prophet speaketh of the chief power, riches, pleasures, & promotions of the world, & liketh them to dreams and most vain visions wherewith they which are asleep are deluded. What other durst say, that the good things, riches & power of these Kings, Princes, and rich men are nothing else but dreames, when as for them, men mingle earth with heaven, fire with water, raging without measure and end in the world? But the cause hereof is, for that they yet sleepe, therefore they do yet see nothing hereof, as they want faith, so also are they de-

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stitute of this light. For now is our salvation neerer, then when we beleved. What meane these words? did we beleve before, and doe wee not beleve now? Here we must call to mind that which *Paul* writeth *Rom. 1.* that God promised the Gospel by his Prophets in the holy Scripture, concerning his sonne Iesus Christ our Lord, that all should by him be saved, according to that which was said unto Abraham *Gen. 22.* *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.* This blessing promised to Abraham in his seed, is nothing else, our grace and salvation in Christ offered to the whole world by the Gospel, which *Paul* so interpreteth, *Rom. 4.* and *Gal. 3.* For Christ is that seed of Abraham, that is, as he is man, his flesh and blood, by whom and in whom shall be blessed, as many as beleve in him, and call upon him. This promise was afterward by the Prophets continually more and more declared and preached. for they did all write of the coming of Christ, of the grace which he should bring, and of the Gospel, which *Peter* also witnesseth *Acts 4.* This promise of God all the faithfull believed which dyed before Christ was borne, who by this faith were saved, and obtained salvation in Christ and through Christ. Hereunto *Paul* now had respect when he said: *Our salvation is now neerer then when we beleved.* For that which he saith is thus much in effect: We beleved in time past, that the promise made unto Abraham, should be fulfilled, now it is fulfilled, and those things that we beleved should come to passe, are now present: Christ is come, the Gospel is revealed and published, and the blessing which we looked for is spread over the world, all things which we tarried for, and beleved being promised, are come. And hereby the Apostle signified the spirituall day, whereof he speaketh afterward, which is properly the beginning and manifestation of the Gospel, whereof we will hereafter speake. Now by this, that those things which we beleved should be fulfilled, are now fulfilled, our faith is not any whit made voide or frustrate, but much more sound and perfect. For as they of the old time before Christs incarnation beleved the promise of God which should be fulfilled, so we beleve that the same is fulfilled, and the faith is altogether the same in it self, but that our faith followed theirs, as the fulfilling followeth also the promise. For either faith trusteth in the seed of Abraham, that is, in Christ, theirs before his incarnation, ours after it. Wherefore he that should at this day beleve with the Jewes that Christ is to come, should make God a Lyar, as though he had not yet fulfilled his promise, which he hath fulfilled, and being fulfilled would have it published and preached. So also should salvation be yet farre from the belevers, which we should look for being as yet to come, in the time that shall hereafter follow. Of this double faith *Paul* speaketh *Rom. 1. 8.* *By the Gospel righteousness which God giveth, is revealed from faith to faith.* What meaneth this,

from faith to faith? nothing else, but that albeit the faith of the Fathers and our faith is the same, whereby it is beleaved in Christ either to come, or which hath already appeared: yet the Gospel doth lead from their faith to ours, so that it is now necessary not only to beleieve the promise that was to be fulfilled, but also that it is fulfilled, which it did not behove Abraham and the other Fathers to beleieve, although they had the same Christ which we have. For there is one faith, one spirit, one Christ, one communion of all Saints, this difference onely there is betweene us, that they went before Christ, we follow him. We have therefore beleaved, and we doe also beleieve, to wit, the fathers and we, with a like and common faith in the same Christ, although not after the same manner, as it is said. And as by reason of this communion of faith which we have alike in the same Christ, we say: we have beleived, or we did beleieve, when as not we, but the fathers have beleived, or did beleieve, so they againe did say, that they should heare, see, and beleieve in Christ, when as not they, but we doe live in that time. We read not in a few places of the Scriptures, that they which were before the incarnation of Christ, took upon them the person of them which are after it, and they which are after it, of them which were before it, because of the communion of faith, and the same Christ, which they have in common, and so there is as it were one companie of beleivers. Now whereas the Apostle saith, that salvation is now neerer unto us then when we beleaved, that is, when our Fathers those ancient beleivers did looke for it to come, we must not understand it of the neerenesse of possession, as though we now had it neerer and more certainly then they, for the Fathers had altogether the same faith, as it is said, and the same Christ, wherefore salvation was as neere unto them as unto us. For Christ yesterday, and to day, the same also is forever.

*Heb. 13.* Christ continueth the same from the beginning of the world even unto the end, by whom all are saved alike. But *Paul* speaketh of the neerenesse of revealing, that whatsoever things were said before concerning Christ, they were now fulfilled, death being overcome, the Lord did sit at the right hand of the Father, the Gospel was preached abroad in the world, by which Christ did come unto all in the whole world, for this cause *Paul* saith that our salvation is neerer then when it was hidden, and known unto few men: because that Christ being not yet glorified, it was not meet that the preaching of salvation should be made publique or common. Whereas therefore the Apostle saith here, *Our salvation is now neerer us*, he saith the same thing in the Epistle to *Titus* in other words: *The grace of God which bringeth salvation, hath appeared*, that is, hath sprung forth, and is every where commonly preached: although it was not hid before in any of the Saints, notwithstanding

standing it was not yet commonly known unto the world. After the same sort the Scripture speaketh in many places, when it sometime saith that Christ is to come, sometime that he is come, although he alwayes hath been, and is in all the elect. Howbeit because he had not before his resurrection come to all by publique preaching, the Scripture speaketh diversly of his comming. For because of this publique preaching he came in the flesh, being made man, for his incarnation had not been profitable to any, if the Gospel had not thereupon been preached, by which he came into the whole world, and whereby it is commonly known, why he was made man, whereby that blessing promised to *Abraham*, is now published, and made common to all which by the Gospel beleeve in Christ. Hereupon *Paul* saith very well, *Rom. i.* that the Gospel was promised of God, &c. as though he would say, although God hath promised every where in the writings of the Prophets his son in the flesh, yet forasmuch as all that should be done, that the Gospel might be preached abroad in the world, whereby he commeth spiritually to the mindes of the beleevers, (which comming only bringeth salvation, and is farre to be preferred before that comming in the flesh, inasmuch as it was done because of this) I say rather that God promised by the Prophets in Scripture the Gospell concerning his sonne. For God considered the Gospel and our faith in all these things, for which he would also have him to be made man, that the Gospel might be preached of him, that being made man, he hath saved us by his death, and that the salvation which he hath wrought, might goe into the whole world, and be made neere unto all. Some have taught foure comings of Christ, according to the foure Sundayes in Advent as they call it, but this comming of Christ by the Gospel, which is most necessarie of all, and of which all doe depend, of which *Paul* here speaketh, this comming I say, they could not see, inasmuch as they are ignorant, both what the Gospel is, and to what end it was given. They babble many things of the comming of Christ, and neverthelesse they drive him further from themselves, then heaven is distant from the earth. For what can Christ profit any man which doth not possesse him by faith? or how can any man possesse him by faith, where the Gospel is not preached?

*The night is passed and the day is at hand* : His meaning in effect is, that salvation is at hand. For by the day *Paul* understandeth the Gospel, namely, that it is that day, whereby our hearts and minds are enlightened, therefore such a day being sprung, our salvation is certainly at hand, that is, Christ and his grace promised in time past to *Abraham*, hath shined forth by preaching in the whole world, giveth light unto all men, raiseth all out of sleep, sheweth true and eternall good things, wherein we may be hereafter occupied, and may walke honestly in this day. Contrariwise, by the night all doctine is to be understood, which

is not the Gospell, beside which none can bring saluation. But if thou do a litle more exactly weigh the words, thou shalt see that *Paul* describeth that part of the day, which is most delectable of al, & most full of al pleasantnesse, namely the joyfull and amiable morning, and the rising of the sunne. For it is the morning when the night is gone and ended, and the day is now come, whereupon all things are marvelously cheered, and recreated, the birds sing, other living creatures do stirre up with alacritie and joyfullnesse: men being as it were made alive againe, do goe forth to their labours: all things, the day springing, and the morning shining, are so affected, as though the world were renewed, and all things restored to life again. Wherefore in many places of the Scripture, the joyfull, prosperous, & quickning preaching of the Gospell is likned to the morning and rising of the sunne, as it is here of *Paul* who calleth the Gospell day springing or arising. Also *Psal.* 110. *In the dayes of thy power shall the people offer thee free will offerings, of the wombe of the morning shall the dewe of thy children spring.* Here also the Gospell is plainly called the womb of the morning, and the day of the power of *Christ* when we are conceived and born the Children of God as dew, to wit, without the labour of men by the only grace of the holy Ghost from heaven. The most pleasant comfortable sunne *Jesus Christ* maketh this day, whom the Scripture hereupon calleth the sunne of righteousness: *God saith Mala. 4. To you that feare my name, shall that Sun of righteousness arise, and beate h shall be under his wings.* For as many as believe in *Christ*, doe receive of him the beames of his grace and righteousness, and doe obtaine saluation under his wings. Whereupon it is said. *Psal.* 118. *This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoyce and be glad in it.* as though he said: this corporall Sunne maketh the corporall day. but *God* himself maketh this day, even he is that Sun, from whence those beams and that day come, wherewith the whol world is enlighbened. Finally, hereupon he calleth himself the light of the world, *Iohn 9.* And *Psal.* 119 *The heavens declare the glory of God, that is, even as these bodily heavens doe bring the Sun and the day, and the sunne is carried in them, so the Apostles have in themselves, and bring by preaching, the true Sun, which is Christ, &c.* Whereupon it followeth: *In the heavens he hath set a tabernacle for the sunne, which cometh forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber, and reioyceth as a giant to run his course. His setting forth is from the utmost part of heaven, and his circuit unto the utmost part thereof: and there is nothing hid from his heat.* All this is said of the exceeding pleasant beginning or rising of this day, that is of the Gospell, which the Scripture every where marvelously seeth forth. For it is a word which quickneth, maketh glad, willing, cheerefull, and ready to doe good works, and finally it bringeth with it all good



good things Wherefore it is called the Gospel or glad tidings, for that it is a pleasant, and prosperous message of the grace of God, and of all good things. But who is able to rehearse all those things, which this day revealeth and maketh manifest unto us? For it teacheth all things, what God is, what we are, whatsoever is past, and to come, of heaven, hell, the earth, Angels, and Devils. By this lamp is shewed unto us, how we ought to behave our selves in all these things, and toward all, from whence we are, and whither we goe. Yet nevertheless Satan hath deceived us miserable creatures, that neglecting such a day, whereby all things might be cleare and manifest unto us, we seek the truth of Philosophers and heathen men, who have not so much as by a dreame known any whit of these things, and so we have suffered our selves to be blinded with men traditions, and to be thrust back againe into the night. For it is not light, whatsoever is not this day, otherwise *Paul* and the whole Scripture should in vaine extoll this day alone, and call all other beside it the night. Surely the burden of Gods displeasure must needs be most grievous, for that contrarie to so plain and manifest places of Scripture, we have sought another light, although the Lord himselfe calleth himselfe the light and sunne of the world. And if other proof were wanting, this one is sufficient, that universities doe so impudently both set up and glorie of *Aristotle* as a light unto them, in whom they exercise themselves much more then in Christ, yea nothing in Christ, but altogether in *Aristotle*.

Let us therefore cast away the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. As Christ is the sun, & the Gospel the day, so faith is the light wherby to see and watch in this day. For it would not profit, asbeit the sunne did shine, and make the day, if the eyes did not perceive the light. Wherefore although the Gospel be begun and preached in the whole world, yet none are lightened, but they that receive it, and by faith being made capable of the light, doe arise out of sleepe. But to them as yet sleepe this sunne and day bring no profit, of which they receive no light, no more then if no sunne or day had shined. And this is that season and houre, whereof he speaketh: *Wellbeloved brethren, forasmuch as we know this, that it is now time that we should arise out of sleepe, &c.* It is a spirituall time and season, although begun in this outward time, as it doth daily also come, wherein we ought to arise out of sleepe, and lay aside the works of darknesse. Whereby *Paul* sheweth that he doth not speak to them which are yet void of faith: for as it is said, he teacheth not faith here, but the workes and fruits of faith, when as he saith: We know that the time is come, and that the night being passed, the day is at hand: they which believe not cannot know these things. Now if thou object & say, what reason or cause is there that he should write these things to the

faithfull



faithfull, inasmuch as they know that it is time? &c. Thou must call to minde that in the begining of the exposition of this text of the Apostle, we have said that the office of preaching is of two sorts, one of teaching, another of exhorting and moving. Now a man cannot attain unto that knowledge, that it should not be needfull that he be alwayes moved, and kept in a continuall and fresh meditation of those things which he hath learned, least the devill, the world, and the flesh [which are enemies that never grant truce, neither slack their assault] which doe make him weary and slouthfull, that he may at the last sleepe, and become altogether negligent in good things. For the Divell, saith *Peter*, is such an enemy, as goeth about continually like a roaring Lyon, seeking whom he may devour: Wherefore he saith: *Watch and beseege*. Paul also will have us doe the same thing here. For seeing that the Divell, the flesh, and the world keep no meane, nor make no end of fighting against us, neither must there be any meane kept or end made of exhorting, provoking, and moving us to watch and work. Hereupon the Holy Ghost is called an exhorter, inasmuch as he inviteth and moveth us unto good. For the same cause Paul also useth here chosen words: the works of darknesse he calleth not armour, but the works of light he calleth armour, not works: undoubtedly that he might shew, that there is a fight, that labour and travell is required, and that it cannot be obtained without perill, to watch and live well, forasmuch as so mightie enemies, the Divell, the flesh, and the world doe without ceasing fight against us, wherefore *Iob* saith chap. 7. *The life of man upon earth is a fight and temptation*. Now it is not a small matter to stand all our life long in the battell, wherefore there is need of very shrill trumpets and warlike drummes, that is, of earnest admonitions, and exhortations, wherby we may be stirred up and encouraged to persevere valiantly in the fight. Hereupon now it appeareth, why he calleth good workes armour or weapon, and calleth not the works of darknesse so, which notwithstanding, if we consent unto them are also weapons, Rom. 6. *Give not your members as weapons of unrighteousnesse*. Again it is before said, that by light is here signified faith, which from the day of the Gospel by the sunne Christ, shineth into our hearts, and enlighteneth them, therefore the armour or weapons of light are nothing else but the workes of this faith. Contrariwise darknesse is infidelitie or unbelief, which is by reason of the absence of the Gospel as of the day, and of Christ as of the sunne. This darknesse the Divell doth rule, which cometh from the doctrine of men, and the judgement of mans own reason: wherefore the works of darknesse, are the works of infidelitie, for as Christ is the Lord and governour of the light, which we said to be faith: so Paul Ephes. 6, calleth Satan the prince of darknesse, that is, of them which are without faith, and refuse

to be obedient to God, as the same Apostle witnesseth, *1 Cor. 1.* If our Gospel be then hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world (namely the Diuelli) hath blinded the minds, that it should not shine unto them. But what both this armour or weapon of light, and weapons of darknesse are, it is now taught of the Apostle. *Let us walk honestly as in the day.* No man worketh those things in the day, which he is wont to worke in darknesse, every one seareth another, and endeavoureth himself to live honestly. It is commonly said: the night is full of shame, which is true, and therefore men doe those things in the night, which they would be ashamed to doe in the day, but the day is not without shame, and requireth an honest conversation. After the same sort ought a Christian life to be: a Christian ought to commit nothing, whereof he may be ashamed, although the whole world should see his works and doings. For he that liveth and worketh so, that he is unwilling that all his works and doings should be seen and heard of all men, and his whole life be manifestly known unto all, liveth a life unworthy of Christ, according to that which our Saviour himself saith *John 3.* Every man that doth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds might be made manifest, that they are wrought according to God. Hereby it appeareth how necessarie it is, that we should be provoked and exhorted to watch and to put on the armour of light. For what one is there at this day among Christians, which can abide, that all his works should be published openly in the light. Now what a Christian life is this, how hypocritically doe we live, when as we cannot suffer our life so much as to be disclosed before men, which now is disclosed before God and all his Angels, and in the last day shall be disclosed before all creatures? Wherefore it becometh a Christian to live so, as he desireth to appeare in the last day, and before all. Hereupon Paul saith: *walk as the children of light: the fruit of the spirit is, goodnesse, and rightcousnesse, and truth.* And *Rom. 13.* *Produce things honest, not only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of all men.* And *1 Cor. 1.* *Our rejoycing is this the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicitie and godly purenesse, and not in fleshy wisdom, but by the grace of God we have had our conversation in the world.* Howbeit such a life shall nothing at all appeare, where faith is not, but where a lively, a cheerfull and a strong faith is, there such a life cannot be wanting, forasmuch as such a faith is not wearied with well doing, neither sleepeth. Wherefore it is no lesse necessarie, to preach to them that have received the doctrine of faith, whereby they may be provoked and stirred up to goe on in the good life which they have embraced, and that they suffer not themselves to be overcome by the assaults of the raging flesh, the

the craftie world, and most subtille Satan, then it is meet that the doctrine of faith be preached to them that be as yet ignorant of Christ. *Working gluttonie and drunkenesse, neither in chambering and wantonnesse, nor in strife and envying.* Here he rehearseth the workes of darknesse by name, one of which he named also before, to wit, sleep, according to that saying 1 Thes. 5. *Let us not sleep as doe other, but let us watch and be sober.* Not that he forbiddeth naturall sleep, but spirituall, which is infidelitie, whereof those workes of the flesh proceed: howbeit naturall sleep also is a worke of darknesse, if it be used for pleasure, and through immoderate filling of the belly, so that it is a hindrance to the light, that is, faith, and to the armour thereof. Moreover these six workes of darknesse which he here rehearseth, doe comprehend all the rest. For Gal. 5. and Colos. 3. he reckneth up more of them, but we will divide those, which he here rehearseth, into two sides, the right and the left. On the right side these foure fight with the spirit, gluttonie, drunkenesse, chambering and wantonnesse: on the left side (forasmuch as the left side in the Scripture signifieth adversitie) those things which proceed from thence doe fight, as are wrath, contention and such like: but the right side signifieth prosperity, and those things which ensue thereof as delights, gluttonie, drunkenesse, and overmuch sleep, &c. Now it is sufficiently manifest, that Paul under two workes of darknesse here rehearsed, namely, contention & envying doth comprehend the rest also of that sort, among which are bitterness, anger, wrath, crying, and evil speaking, Ephes. 4. And those which he rehearseth in the Epistle to the Galatians: Hatred, debate, emulation, seditions, heresies, murders, &c. In a summe, hereunto pertaineth whatsoever come of evil anger, either in words or deeds, all which cannot be numbred. After the same sort under those foure, gluttonie, drunkenesse, chambering and wantonnesse, he comprehendeth the vices of lust, which are wont to be committed as well in words as workes, which also no man is able to number. And so the present words of the Apostle doe shew, neither needeth it any further declaration, that by these six workes all things are to be understood, whereby they that are void of faith, and are yet in darknesse, doe live unpurely as concerning themselves, and unjustly toward their neighbours, whose whole life is disordered and out of course both toward themselves and toward others. For there is no man that knoweth not what it is to be gluttonous and drunken, that is, either to eat or drinke above a measure necessarie for the body, it is as well known what it is to sleep in chambers, and to be wanton, that is, to follow the pleasure of the bodie, both with sleeping above measure; and with other lewd and unchaste gestures and workes, which are wont to be committed in chambers of full fed, well ripled, idle and slothfull bellies, as well in the day, as in the night, as well when they are alone, as in the resort and com-

company of others. All which things do require even naturall darkness, & secret places, and are signified of *Paul* by chambering and wantonnesse.

But put ye on the Lord *Jesus Christ*. In these words as it were in a summe, he sheweth all the Armour of light, when as he exhorteth us to put on Christ. Now Christ is put on of us after two sorts: first when we are clothed with his righteousness, which is done by faith, wherewith he that is endued, beleeveth that Christ for him died, and fulfilled all things. For not ours, but Christs righteousness hath reconciled us to the Father and delivered us from sinnes. And so to put on Christ pertaineth to the doctrine of faith, which teacheth that Christ was given unto us, and is unto us instead of a pledge. Whereof *Paul* speaketh *Gala. 3.* *All ye that are baptised into Christ have put on Christ.* The other manner of putting on Christ is, when we weigh and consider that he is given unto us, also instead of an example, that we should shew our selves serviceable, toward our neighbours, being endued with the same vertues, with which we by faith acknowledge that he being adorned, did serve us, that so we may resemble him in all points: and of this manner of putting on Christ *Paul* speaketh here. The same also he willet us to do. *1. Cor. 11.* when he saith, *As we have borne the image of the earthly, so let us now beare the image of the heavenly.* And *Ephes. 4.* *Cast ye of concerning the conversation in times past, that old man, which is corrupt through the deceitfull lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new man, which after God is created unto righteousness and true holiness.* Now in Christ we see nothing but the armour of light, no gluttony, no drunkenness, burlesking, temperance, keeping under of the flesh by divers labours, travelling preaching, praying, and doing well to all men, in him was no place for sloathfullnesse or superfluous sleepe, much lesse for wantonnesse, but a marvellous, chastity and puritie: he accustomed himself to watch, to arise early, to lye on the ground in the field, having neither house, neither chamber, nor bed: in him was no wrath, contention, or brawling, but altogether goodnesse, sweetness, meeknesse, charity, mercy, patience, &c. Wherefore as *Paul* saith here briefly, Put ye on the Lord *Jesus Christ*, it is as much as that we should see him before us as an example to follow. He teacheth the *Colossians* the same thing in somewhat more words, after this sort: *Now therefore as the elect of God holy and beloved put on the bowells of mercie, kindness, humbleness of minde, meeknesse, long suffering: forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrell to another: even as Christ forgave, even so do ye. And above all these things put on love which is the bond of perfectness: and let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which you are called in one body, and be ye thankful. And Philip after that he had exhorted them to love one another, and that every man should*

Should esteeme other better then himselfe, and seek to pleasure, and doe for other, he also seereth Christ before them as an example who shewed himselfe to us our servant, and saith: *Let the same minde be in you, that was euen in Christ Iesus, who being in the forme of God, thought it no robbery to be equall with God. But he made himselfe of no reputation, and took on him the forme of a servant, and was made like unto men, and was found in shape as a man.* The sum thereof is this: the armour of weapons of light are good workes, contrary to those workes of darknesse, gluttony, drunkennesse, chambering, wantonnesse, contention, and envying, such workes are, to fast, to watch, to pray, to labour, to suffer hunger, thirst, cold, heat, to be chaste, to use modestie, temperancie, goodnes, and that I do not thrust in too many of mine own words, let us heare Paul himselfe rehearsing them in order Gal. 5. *The fruits of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentlenesse, goodnesse, faith, meeknesse, temperancie.* But he rethraeth them farr more at large. 3. Cor. 6. saying: *We beseech you that you receive not the grace of God in vaine: for he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold now the accepted time, behold now the day of salvation,* as if he said: Our salvation is now neerer unto us then when we beleevved, so wile, than it would come to passe, that these dayes of salvation, in which the Gospall is preached abroad to the whole world, should appeare. It is time therefore to arise out of sleepe: Let us give no occasion of offence in any thing, that our ministry be not reprehended. But in all things, Let us approve our selves as the ministers of God, in much patience in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in prisons, in tumults, in labours, by watchings, fastings, by purity, by knowledge, by long suffering, by kindnesse, by the holy Ghost, by love unfeined: By the word of truth; by the power of God, by the Armour of righteousness on the right hand & on the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report & good report, as deceivers, and yet true as unknown, & yet known: as dying, and behold we live: as chastened, and yet not killed: as sorrowing, and yet alway reioycing: as poore, and yet making many rich: as having nothing, & yet possessing all things. See what a plentiful & very golden stream floweth out of the mouth of Paul. Hereof I think we most plainly perceive, what is the armour of light, wherewith we must be fenced and fortified both on the right hand and on the left. Now this most fitly agreeth with the matter, whercoas he seteth before us a most excellent and perfect example, namely the Lord himselfe, saying: *Put ye on the Lord Iesus Christ.* For he is a sluggish beast & not a man, who when he seerth his Lord fast, suffer hunger, labour, watch and to be weary, yet giveth himselfe to gluttony, sleepe and pleasures. What Lord could take these things at his servants hand, nay what servant durst presume to doe these things? So it cannot be that a Christian man should not be ashamed, when

when he beholdeth Christ, and seeth himselfe so unlike unto him, yea occupied in quite contrary things. For whom the example of Christ himselfe doth not stirre him up, exhort, and move, who can bring or stirre up him unto goodnesse? What would the leaves of words do with their small noise, if these thundrings of the example of Christ doe not move; And surely for this cause *Paul* of purpose adjoynd this word *Lord*, saying: *Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ*, as if he said: count it no great nor burdenous thing, to stand and fight in this armour of light, ye that are servants, behold your Lord, who when he had no need, did notwithstanding, so well and valiantly use this armour, and fought in it for you.. And take no thought for the flesh to fulfill the lusts of it. The Apostle in these few words hath noted two cares of the flesh: One is naturall, whereby necessary food and apparell is provided for the body, that it may live, and be able to sustaine his labour, least that it be by overmuch abstinence weakened, and made unprofitable to worke. The other care is joynd with sinne, when the body is provided for to fulfill the lusts thereof, & that it may be delighted: this care the Apostle here forbiddeth, for it ingendereth the works of darknesse, so to pamper and make of the flesh, which is continually to be chastised, that it may be obedient to the spirit, and may no shake of the sinner, like unto an untamed horse albeit that chastising is so to be tempered, that the body notwithstanding may doe his duty, and beare the sinner. For as the fodder, the whip and the burden belongeth unto the asse: so meate, correction, and worke unto the servant. *Ecclesiastic. 33.* he doth not say that thou shalt flay or slay the asse, neither that thou shalt kill the servant, or cast him into prison: so unto the body the chastising and labour thereof is due, and necessary foode is not to be withheld from it, *Paul* himselfe saith *I tame my body, and bring it into subjection.* He saith not, I cast it into sickness, or I kill it, but I subdue it to the spirit, that it may serve, and be obedient thereunto. Moreover these words, *to fulfill the lusts thereof*, *Paul* added because of two sorts of men, whereof the first under a pretence of naturall necessitie, doe satisfie their pleasure, and cover that practice under this false pretence. We are so prone and ready unto this, that even many of the Saints have very much complained of this evil, and because of it, have often times above measure afflicted their bodies: for the flesh is so crafty and marvelous subtle to prepare delights for it selfe, that no man can sufficiently take heede of it, yea it is needfull that a man here do never leave to care and feare. The other sort of men are those blinde holy ones, which think that the Kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof consisteth in meates and drink, and in chosen apparrell, and doe besides their owne workes regard nothing: when they have so fasted that they have made their head diseased, and their stomack disordered, and doe bring unto their body some great infirmity

infirmity, or sicknesse, they then think that they have been marvelous hoys, and have wrought incomparable good workes. But *Paul* saith: *Meate makerb us not acceptable to God, for neither if we eate have we the more: neither if we eate not have we the lesse.* And *Collos. 2.* he writeth thus much in effect: Beware of worshipping of Angells, which hath a shew of wisdom because of humblenesse and superstition, whereby they spare not the body, while they withdraw from it the measure of foode due unto it, bestowing nothing upon it whereby it may be fed. This preposterous worshipping of Angells, yea indeed superstition, did so deceive *Gerſon*, other wise a notable man, that he praised the Charterhouse Monkes, for that they did so constantly abstaine from flesh, that even when they were sick, they would eate none, although they might preserve themselves even from death thereby. But what if God should iudge them as killers of their owne body? For there can be none at all either ordinance or order, yea or vow contrary to the commandement of God, and if there be any such, surely it ought to be of no force, even as if thou hadest vowed adultery. Now God both here by *Paul*, and else where hath commanded that necessary provision should be made for the body, and hath forbidden that we should procure the death of it: wherefore those things that are profitable to preserve it, whether they be flesh, or eggs, or any thing else, must be given unto it, in what day or time soever, whether it be the sixt or first day of the weeke, whether it be in Lent or after Easter, in the meane season whatsoever orders, laws, & vows, yea even of the Pope being neglected. For it is not lawfull for any man, no not for the Angels to forbid any thing against the commandement of God. Howbeit this madnes proceedeth from that darknesse and blindness, whereby miserable men doe regard the worke only, and think that they shall obtaine salvation through the greatnesse and multitude of workes. But *Paul* willeth that our fastings and other chastisings of the flesh be the weapons of light, whereby the workes of darknesse may be overcome, and not the body destroyed: wherefore there ought to be no other use among Christians of fastings, wachings and labours. As it is alone before God whether thou eat fish or flesh: whether thou drink wine or water: whether thou weare read or greene garments: all these are the good creatures of God, made unto this end, that we may use them: have regard only to this, that thou mayst use them with a meane and mayst abstaine thy selfe so much from them, as shall suffice to overcome the workes of darknesse. Wherefore it is impossible that a common manner of this abstinence should be appointed indifferently to all: for the constitution of all mens bodies is not alike, it is above measure to one, which to another is under measure: one hath neede of much, another of little, and therefore is it meet that every one have regard of himselfe, and governe his owne body, according to the present do-



Erine of Paul, whereas he saith: Take no thought for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof, that is; obey the wisdom thereof so far, that ye deny not the necessary things which it requireth, but grant it not those things, which it requireth to the fulfilling of the lusts thereof; more then necessary, to pleasure only. If a better rule of moderation could have bin given beside this, Paul would not have concealed it.

Hereby thou seest, that the Popish ordinances, which forbid the eating of flesh and certaine meates, are quite contrary to the Gospel: Which Paul hath plainly foretold. 1 Tim. 4. The spirit, saith he, speaketh evidently, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, and shall give heed unto spirits of error, and doctrines of Devils, which speake lyes through hypocrisie, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstaine from meates, which God hath created to be received with giving of thanks. No man surely can deny that these wordes doe briefly approve of the orders of Monkes, and sacrificing Priests, so cleare and manifest are both these wordes, and also their preposterous religion. Moreover thou seest here also, godly Reader, that Paul doth not teach this abstinence, and womanly holiness of certaine, which choose unto themselves certaine dayes, wherein to fast to certaine saines, one to this, another to that, all which are blind proceedings, and builded upon their owne workes. True religion is without choyle of meates and dayes, all the life long to use modesty and sobriety. For seeing that these must be the armour of light, and that it is requisite that our liues be undefiled and chaste, it behoveth us surely never to put off this armour, but we must be found always sober, temperate, watching, labouring and praying. But those doing holy onts one day eate nothing but bread and water, and afterward three whole moneths they daily be drunke and eate excessively, even unlesse they be not well in their wits. Others fast so, that in the evening they eate no meate, but in the meane season they make themselves drunke with drinking. Who is able to rehearse all their storages and all their workes of darknesse? all which proceed from hence, for that foolish men consider and regard the worke, and not the use of the worke, they make of armour a glasse, they are altogether ignorant whereunto it is profitable to fast and abstaine as they are like unto him which carried a sword to the end, that he might looke upon it, and know not how to use it, when he was beaten. These things may suffice to have bin spoken for the exposition of this text. The 19. Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, wherein is taught how the faithfull ought to rejoyce in God, and let their patient minds be knowne unto men. [Phil. 4. verse 4. to the 7.] Rejoyce in the Lord alway, I say unto you. This text indeed is but short, yet methinks it doth most plentifully

abound



abound with right Christian doctrine, instructing first how we ought to behave our selves toward God, secondly how toward our neighbours, saying first, *Reioyce in the Lord alway*. This joy is a fruit of faith, most certainly following it, as Paul witnesseth *Gal. 5.* where he saith: *The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodnesse, faith meeknes, temperance, &c.* Neither can it be that that heart should reioyce in the Lord, which hath not yet believed in him. Whereupon it cometh to passe, that where no faith is, there can be nothing but feare, trembling, horror, and sadness, as often as such either remember God, or heare him named, yea hatred and enmitie of God remaineth in such hearts, the cause whereof is, for that the heart void of faith, findeth it self defiled with finnes, whereby it doubteth not but that it hath deserved the vengeance of God, that finnes cannot be but hated of God, which is just, and so, when it doth not believe that God will be mercifull and favourable unto it, how can it nor but detest all memorie of him? so farte is it of that it can reioyce in the Lord, the revenger of finnes. These two things, the knowledge of sinne, and the vengeance of God prepared for finnes are in the heart of the unbeliever, which heart againe is unbelieving, so hath it no hope of pardon, and therefore what other thing can the se things work in it, but cause it to be troubled, cast down and alwayes fearefull, and greatly terrified, and to think that the vengeance of God doth every moment hang over it, that so that may be verified which Salomon saith: *The ungodly feareth when no man pursueth him.* And that which is said *Deut. 18.* *The Lord shall give thee a fearefull heart, and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee.* If a man will much perswade such a heart, to have joy in the Lord, he shall doe even as if he perswaded the water that it should burne like unto the fire, for if one hath none of this joy, it alwayes feelth in conscience, that the revenging hand of God, is heave upon it. Whereupon the Prophet saith *Psal. 43.* *Be glad O yee righteous, and reioyce in the Lord: and be joyfull all yee that are true of heart.* For his joy in the Lord cannot be but in the righteous and them that are upright in heart. And therefore it is manifest that this part of Scripture was written not for sinners, but to the righteous and Saints. Sinners must first be shewed, how they may be delivered from finnes, and may obtaine God to be favourable unto them, which when they have leaured and so obtained, it followeth that they do of their own accord reioyce in the Lord, being delivered from remorse of conscience. But if any doubt, how one may be delivered from remorse of conscience, & have God mercifull unto him, that is declared before at large, & shal be hereafter copiously spoken of. He which seeketh to have a free & glad conscience, and God

God gentle and favourable, let him not begin at his own works, as the deceitfull Papists teach, only tormenting consciences, and increasing the wrath of God, but let him dispaire of himself and of all his own works, let him embrace God in Christ, having a sure faith in the Gospel, that he shall receive whatsoever it promisseth. But the Gospel promisseth that Christ is given to us, that he may take away our sin, and be our High Priest, Mediatour and Advocate before God, that so we may nothing doubt, but that our sins through Christ only and his workes are forgiven us, and that we are reconciled to God, and that by this meanes our conscience is delivered and comforted.

When such a faith possiblet the heart, and the Gospel is so received indeed, then God appeareth sweet and altogether loving, neither feeleth the heart any thing but the favour and grace of God, it standeth with a strong and bold confidence, it feareth not lead any evill come unto it, it being quiet from all feare of vengeance and displeasure, is merrie, and glad of so incomparable grace and goodness of God given unto it freely and most abundantly in Christ. Wherefore there must needs forthwith proceed from such a love, faith, joy, peace, gladnesse, giving of thanks, praise, and a certain marvelous delight in God, as in a most deare and favourable father, which dealeth so fatherly with us, and poureth forth his gifts so plentifully and in so great a measure upon them that doe not deserve them. Behold of such ioy Paul speaketh here, which truly where it is, there can be no place for sinne, or feare of death or hell, yea nothing is there but a joyfull quiet & omnipotent trust in God and in his favour. Wherefore it is called joy in the Lord, not in gold or silver, gluttony or drunkennesse, in delicacies or singing, health, knowledge, wisdom, power, glory, friendship, favour, no nor in good workes, holinesse, or whatsoever is without God. Of these thou shalt take but a deceitfull and vain joy, which cannot pearse the heart, or enter unto the bottome thereof, whereof thou mayst rightly say that which is wont to be spoken as a proverb among the Germans: This man rejoyceth, but he feeleth not any joy in his heart. There is one full & perfect joy, which the believers take of & in the Lord, which is nothing else, then to commit themselves unto him, and of him alone to rejoyce, trust and presume, as a most favourable and loving father. Whatsoever joy is not after this sort, the Lord doth contemne and reject it, whereof Ieremie speaketh chap. 9. *Let not the wise man rejoyce in his wisdom, nor the strong man in his strength, neither the rich man in his riches: but who so will rejoyce, let him rejoyce in this, that he understandeth & knoweth me.* And Paul 1 Cor. 13. saith: *Let him that rejoyceth rejoyce in Lord.* He addeth, that we must rejoyce alwayes, where he toucheth them, which only half the time do rejoyce

in the Lord, and praise him that is, when all things fall out according to their desire but when adversitie cometh, they change joy with sadness and sorrow, of whom the 48. Psalm speaketh: *So long as thou dost walk unto him he will speake good of thee.* But the Prophet himselfe saith not so: *I will alway blesse God his praise shall ever be in my mouth.* Psal. 34. And he hath iust cause so to do for who shall hurt him, unto whom God is mercifull, surely sinne shall, I not hurt him, neither death or hell, wherefore the Prophet saith in an other place: *Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will feare no evill.* Psal. 23. and Paul 1. th Rom. 8. *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakednesse, or perill, or sword? I am perswaded that neither death nor life, nor Angells, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Iesus our Lord Againe I say reioyce.* This repetition of the Apostle confirmeth his exhortation, and truly not without a cause; forasmuch as we live in the midst of sinnes, and therefore in the midst of tribulations, both which doe move us unto sadness and heavinesse. Wherefore the Apostle purposing to comfort us against these, exhorteth us that we should alwayes reioyce in the Lord, albeit we sometime fall into sinnes. For it is true, the more God with his goodnesse exceedeth the evill of sinne: so much more alwayes to reioyce in him, when we are sorrowfull because of our sinnes, which albeit by nature they bring sadness and sorrow with them, yet forasmuch as they cannot bring so much hurt, as Christ, if we beleve in him bringeth profit and safety, joy in the Lord ought alwayes to have the first place with us, and farre to overcome the sorrow and sadness that cometh by reason of our sinnes. For we must alwayes thinke on that which Iohn writeth: *If any man sinne, we have an Advocate with the Father Iesus Christ the righteous, and he is the reconciliation for our sinnes.* 1 Iohn 2. *Let your patient mind be known unto all men.* He hath already taught, how men ought to behave themselves toward God, namely that they must serve him with a cheerefull heart and continuall joy; now he declareth in few words, how the beleivers ought to behave themselves toward men, saying: *Let your patient mind be known unto all men.* Which words are thus much in effect: Be joyfull toward God, alwayes reioycing in and of him, but toward men be of a patient mind, and plyant applying your selves to all, and so behaving your selves, that ye be ready to doe and suffer all things, and to yeeld in every thing, as much as may be by any meanes without transgressing the Commandement of God, whereby ye may approve your selves to all men, and please

all in that which is good: not only hurting none, but also taking in good worth all things of all men, interpreting aright the sayings of all men, and accepting them in the better part, that men may plainly see you to be them, unto whom all things are alike, which take in good part whatsoever becometh you, which stick in nothing, which would not disagree with any man for any cause, which be rich with the rich, poore with the poore, rejoycing with them that rejoyce, weeping with them that weep, and to be briefe, which be made all things to all men, that all men must needs acknowledge that ye are grievous to none, but agreeable, of a patient mind, pliant, and obedient toward all in all things. The Greeke word *epieikes* which the Apottle here useth, meaneth the same, which signifieth in our tongue a patient and pliant mind, whereby one doth so apply and shew himself indifferent to others, that he is the same to one that he is to another, applying himself indifferently to the will of all, not requiring himself to be counted for a rule, whereunto the rest ought to apply and order themselves. An old interpreter translateth it modestie, which, if thou understand it aright, and not for the only moderation and temperancie of meat and apparell, as it is wont commonly to be taken, is not altogether unfely translated, namely, if thou understand it to be a vertue, whereby one thinking modestly of himself, endeavoureth to order and apply himself unto all, according to the capacitie and abilitie of every one, ready to permit, to take in good part, to obeye, to give place, to doe, to omit, to suffer all things, as he shall see it will profit his neighbour, albe it he must suffer hindrance and lesse of his substance, name, and body thereby. That these things may be made more plain, it shall be good to declare them by examples; *Paul* 1 Cor. 9. writeth thus of himself: *Unto the Iewes I become as a Iew, that I may winne the Iewes: to them that are under the law, as though I were under the law; to them that are without law, as though I were without law; (when I am not without law as pertaining to God, but am in the law through Christ) I am made all things to all men, that I might by all meanes save some.* Behold, thou seest here the patient and pliant mind rightly observing those things which are here commanded. For those things that he writeth of himself have this meaning: Sometimes he did eate, drink, and doe all things as a Iew, albeit it was not necessary that he should so doe; sometimes he did eate and drink with the Gentiles, and did all things as free from the law. For only faith in God, and love toward our neighbour, are necessarily required, all other things are free, so that we may freely observe them for one mans sake, and omit them for another mans sake, as we shall perceive it to be profitable to every one. Now it is contrary to this modestie or meeknesse, if one ha-

ving an impatient minde, trusteth to his owne wit, and contendeth that one thing among the rest is necessary, which thou must neither omit or observe, and so applying himself unto none, but contend-  
ing to have all other to apply themselves unto him, he neglecteth and perverteth the softnes & meeknes which is here taught, yea & the libertie of faith also: such some of the Jewes were, unto whom we must give no place, even as *Paul* yeelded unto them. We see the same example commonly in *Christ*, but specially *Matth. 12.* and *Mar. 2.* where we read that he suffered his Disciples to break the Sabbath, and he himself also, when the case so required, did break it, when it was otherwise, he did keepe it, whereof he gave this reason: *The Sonne of man is Lord even of the Sabbath.* Which is as much to say as: the Sabbath is free, that thou mayest break it for one mans sake and commodity, and for the sake and commodity of another thou mayest keepe it, So *Paul* caused *Timothy* to be circumcised because of the Jewes, for that they thought that it was of importance to their salvation, again he would not have *Titus* circumcised, because certain Jewes did unjustly urge it, so that the circumcision of *Titus* would have been rather a confirmation of errour unto them, then have profited them any thing. *Paul* therefore would keepe circumcision free, that he might sometime use it, and sometime not use it, as he should perceive it to be commodious and profitable to every one.

So, to come to other matters, when the Pope commandeth to make confession, to fast, to abstain from, or use this or that kinde of meat &c. and exacteth these things as necessary to salvation, they are utterly to be condemned, & those things that are contrary to these, are most freely to be done: but if he should command them as necessary, if any man might be holpen or edified in any thing by the observation of them, surely they were to be observed, but freely, & of love only, as also they are to be omitted, if the omitting of them may be profitable to any. The reason of this liberty is this the Sonne of man is Lord of the Sabbath: if of the Sabbath, how much more of the traditions of men? Whatsoever thou shalt observe upon this liberty, it cannot hurt any, but to observe them of necessity, it extinguisheth faith and the Gospel. Likewise, if one live, yet as in a Monastery, if he observe the vows and Ordinances of that life upon Christian liberty, and of love to his brethren that he may edifie them, and of necessity, neither with the hindrance of his owne or other mens salvation, he shall doe godly for he is free: but if those things be straightly required as necessary to salvation, then before thou suffer thy selfe to be brought into this error, Monasteries, shavings, hoods, vows, rules, ordinances, and all such like must be left, and the contrary must be done, to witnesse, that only faith and love are necessary for a Christian,

Christians & that al other things are free, so that he may either omit or do them for the edelifying and cause of them with whom he liueth. Whatsoever thou shalt observe upon liberty and of love, is godly: but it thou observe any thing of necessity, it is ungodly. The same is to be said of all other Ordinances and decrees of men, which are wont to be observed in Monasteries, that whatsoever doth not agree with the word of God, thou mayest being free either observe or omit it, according as thou shalt know it to be profitable & acceptable to them, with whom thou art conversant: but if they be required as necessary, reject them all utterly, and tread them under thy feet. Hereupon thou now seest what a Devilish thing the Papacie and Monasteries be. For whatsoever things be free and to be permitted to free lovenonly, they make them necessary, and say the keeping of them is of importance to salvation, whereby truly as much as is in them they together pervert and extinguish the Gospell and faith. I passe over with silence, that they hereupon set and sell the care of the belly instead of the service of God. For how many among them at this day doe for Gods cause, and not rather for their bellies sake, take upon them to be Monkes or Clerkes, doe frequent the Quier, sing, pray, say Masse, or doe any such thing, wherein they counterfeite and corrupt the true worship and service of God? The common subversion of all Monasteries were the best reformation of al these things, from which so much discommodity & nowhit of profit may be looked for. Before our monastery could be perswaded concerning true Christian liberty, infinite thousands of soules in others should perish, wherefore for asmuch as they bring no commodity at all, neither is there any need of them, and they are cause of greater hindrance to a Christian common wealth, then can be thought, and cannot by any means be reformed, what can be more profitable, then that they be utterly overthrowen and abolished? Moreover that we may admonish here concerning the civill Magistrate, when he commandeth or requireth any thing, yea if he compell thereunto we must obey, for there cometh no losse of Christian liberty or of faith hereby, forasmuch as they do not contend that those things are necessary to salvation which they do ordaine or require, but only to maintain outward rule, publick tranquillity and government, and so the conscience remaineth free. Wherefore, forasmuch as it doth nothing hinder faith to doe those things which the civill Magistrate commandeth, but doth also profit the common weale, it shall be without doubt a point of Christian obedience to endeavour to do them with a willing minde, that we may be such as are pliant and agreeable to all men, willing to doe all things, ready to deserve well of every one, and to gratifie all. Howbeit if any should contend that those commandments of the civill Ma-

gistrate be necessary to salvation, then, as it is said of the traditions of the Papists, the contrary rather were to be done, that the less it were to be witnessed, that thou doest them only for the common weals sake, because it is profitable to others, and not that thou mayest obtain salvation by them, which we have gotten by Christ Iesus alone, as many of us do believe in him. According to this doctrine and the examples before mentioned every one ought to behave himself in every thing & toward all men, as *Paul* here teacheth, that he stick not to his own judgment or right, but that he shew himself pliant unto others, and have regard of those things, which he shall know will be acceptable and profitable to his neighbours. When therefore it doth nothing hinder thy faith, and profiteth thy neighbour to yeeld somewhat of thine owne sight, if thou doe it not, thou art without charity and neglectest that Christian solemne and patient minde that *Paul* here speaketh of: yea if thou hast regard hercof, as he that truly believeth in Christ ought to have, thou must take it patiently even when any man doth injury unto thee, or endamage thee, and so interpret it in the better part, and alwayes think on that which that Martyr when all his substance was taken from him, sayd: but they shall not take away Christ from me. So whatsoever chanceth unto thee, say thou: I have as yet suffered no losse of my faith, why should I not take it in good part, which my neighbour hath done? why should I not yeeld unto him, and apply my selfe to his will? Thou canst scarce finde a more manifest example hercof, then between two unfeined friends: for as they behave themselves one toward another, so ought a Christian to behave himselfe toward every one. Either of them endeavoureth to gratify other, either of them giveth place to other, suffereth, doth, and omiteth whatsoever he seeth to be for the profit and commoditie of the other, and that freely without all constraint. Either of them doth diligently apply himself to the will of the other, neither of them compelleth other to follow his minde, and if one should use the goods of another, the other would not be offended, but would take it in good part, and would not grudge rather to give more; and that I may speak briefly, between such there is no exaction of Law, no grudging, no constraint, no necessity, but liberty, favour, and goodwill. Contrariwise, such as be impatient and obstinate, which take nothing in good part of any man, but go about to make all things subiect to their own will, and to order all things according to their owne judgement, such I say trouble the world, and are the cause of all discords, contentions, warres, and whatsoever discommodity there is, they say afterward, that they did those things for the love of iustice, and for that they endeavoured to defend that which

which is right. So that that Heathen man said not amiss: Extreme rigour is extreme injury. And *Salomon* also saith *Eccles. 7.* *Be thou neither too righteous nor over wise.* For as extreme rigour is extreme injury, so too great wisdom is extreme folly. Which also is meant by this common saying: when wise men doe they doe beyond measure. Surely if God should deal with us according to right, we should perish in a moment, wherefore as *Paul* prayeth in him this moderation of right, and incomparable patience and gentleness saying, *2. Cor. 10. I beseech you by the meeknesse and gentlenesse of Christ,* so it is also meet that we do observe a measure of our judgement, right, wisdom, prudence, and in all things apply our selves to the profit and commodity of others. But let us weigh the words of the Apostle, for they are placed not without a spirituall skilfullnes he saith: *Let your patient minde or softnesse be knowne unto all men.* Where thou must not thinke that he commandeth thee to be made known unto all men, or that thou oughtest to tell thy patient minde or softnesse before all men. For he saith not, tell it forth, but let it be knowne, that is, endeavour to practise it toward men, I doe not command that ye should thinke or speak of it, but that ye labour that it may be known indeed, while all men doe trie and feele it, that no man may say any other thing of you, then that yee be of a patient minde, and pliant, and applying your selves to all men, being enforced so to say even by manifest experience. So that if any man were never so much bent to speak otherwise of you, his mouth might be stopped by the testimony of al other, witnessing of your patient minde & meeknesse. So saith *Christ, Mat. 5. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good workes, and glorifie your Father which is in Heaven.* And *Peter* saith, *1 Pet. 2. 12. Have your conversation honest among the Gentiles, that they which speak evill of you as of evill doers may by your good workes, which they shall see glorifie God in the day of visitation.* It is not surely in our power, that our patient minde should be knowne and acknowledged of all men, but it shall be sufficient for us, if wee endeavour that all men may have tryall thereof in us, and that no man may finde it wanting in our life. Moreover [all men] is not so to be taken, thou shouldest understand thereby all men which are in the world, but rather all sorts of men, that we have regard to be of a patient minde as well toward enemies as friends, as well toward servants as Masters, small as great, poore as rich, strangers as them at home, toward them that we know not, as toward them with whom we are familiar. For there are some, which behave themselves very gently and patiently toward strangers, but toward them that are in the house with them, or with whom they alwayes keepe company, there are none more obstinate

or



or froward then they. And how many are there, which at great and rich mens hands take all things in good part, interpreting every thing at the best, and most gently beare, whatsoever they say or doe, but toward the poore and abjects they shew no gentleness or meeknesse, neither take any thing of them in good part. So we are all ready to doe for our children, pitents, friends, and kinsmen, and most favourably interpret and willingly beare whatsoever they have committed. How often doe we even praise the manifest vices of our friend, or at the least wink at them, and apply our selves most fitly unto them? but to our enemies and adversaries we impart none of this favour, in them we can find nothing that is good, nothing that is to be borne, nothing that can be interpreted in the better part, but we dispraise every thing and take it at the worst. Against such parted & imperfect patient minds *Paul* here speaketh saying: *Let your patient mind be known unto all men*: he will have our patient mind and right Christian meeknesse to be perfect and entire toward all, whether they be enemies or friends, he will have us suffer and take in good part all things of all men, without all respects either of persons or deserts. And such without doubt will our patients minde be, if it be true and not counterfite: no other wise then gold remaineth gold, whether a godly or ungodly man possesse it, and the silver, which *Ishtar*, who betrayed the Lord, had, was not turned into ashes, but remained that which it was, as truly all the good creatures of God, whosoever have them, doe continue toward all things, that which they are: So a patient mind which is sincere, comming of the spirit, continueth like it selfe, whether it light upon enemies or friends, poore men or rich. But our nature which is full of deceit and plainly corrupt, doth so behave it selfe, as if that which is gold in the hand of *Peter*, were turned into a cole in the hand of *Judas*, and it is wont to be patient and pliant toward rich men, great personages, strangers friends, and not toward every one, wherfore it is false, vain, vile, hypocriticall, and nothing but deceit and mockerie before God. Hereof now learne how impossible sound, and entire, that is, spirituall meeknesse and a patient minde is unto nature, and how few there be which marke this evill, by reason of that deceitfull meeknesse and patient minde, though in ourward shew very Goodly, which they shew unto certaine, thinking that they doe well and justly, in that they are more hard and impatient toward some. For so their defiled and filthy nature teacheth them, by her goodly reason, which alwayes iudgeth, and doth against the spirit and those things that are of the spirit, because as *Paul* saith: *Rom. 8. they that are after the flesh, favour the things of the flesh*. But to conclud, it is manifest that the Apostle hath comprehended in these few words the whole life

of ioy in God, and a patient mind toward men. 203

life worthy of a Christian, which he ought to lead toward his neighbour. For he that is of a patient mind, pliant and meeke indeed, studieth to deserve well of all men, as well concerning the body as concerning the soule, as well indeed as in words, and doth also beare with a most patient mind, the effences and mallice of others. Where such a minde is, there is also love, ioy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodnesse, and whatsoever is the fruite of the spirit. Gal. 5. But here flesh murmureth: If we should endeavour to be so meek & patient, saith the flesh, that we should take all things in good part of all men, it would come to passe, that no man should be able to keepe a peece of bread safely and in peace, for the uniuert which would abuse our meeknesse and patient mind, they would take away all things, yea they would not suffer us to live. Mark how comfortably and abundantly the Apostle doth satisfie this distrustful & foolish cogitation, even from this place unto the end of this text *The Lord is at hand*. As though he said: if there were no Lord or no God, one might feare, when by his meeknesse and patient minde he counteth all things alike, and taketh all things in good part, that that would be damage and hurt unto him, but now there not only is a Lord, which governeth all things most iustly, but he is also at hand, he cannot forget or forsake thee, be thou only of a patient mind and gentle toward all, let him have the care of thee, nourish, and preserve thee. He hath given Christ the eternall good, how should not he also give things necessary for the belly? Hee hath tare more, then can be taken away from thee, and thou forasmuch as thou hast Christ, hast much more then the whole world. Hereunto pertaineth that which is said *Psalm. 55. Cast thy burthen upon the Lord, and he shall nourish thee*. And 1 Pet. 5. *Cast all your care on him for he careth for you*. And Christ saith *Mat. 6. Behold the fowles of the ayre, and lillies of the field, &c.* all which agree with the present consolation of the Apostle, and have the same meaning which these words here have: *The Lord is at hand. Be nothing carefull*. That is, take no care at all for your selves, let God care for you, who knoweth and is able to doe it, whom ye have now knowne that he is good and gracious. The heathen have not without a cause care of this present life, in as much as they are ignorant and doe not beleve that they have a God who hath care of al, as Christ *Mat. 6. said: Be not carefull of your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink: nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on: for after all these things seek the Gentels, but your heavenly father, knoweth that ye have neede of all these things*. Wherefore let the whole world take from thee, and doe thee iniurie, thou shalt alwayes have sufficient, and it can not be that thou shouldest perish with any adversitie, unless they have first taken from thee thy God, but who can take him from

from thee, if thou thy selfe dost not cast him of? There is no cause therefore that we should be carefull, seeing that he is our father and provideth for us, which hath all things in his own hand, even those which seeme to take away those things that be ours from us, and to endamage and hurt us wherein soever they are able. But we have exceeding great cause alwayes to reioyce in the Lord, when we are of a patient minde toward all men, for asmuch as wee are certaine, if so be that we beleeve, that it can by no meanes come to passe, that good things should be wanting unto us, having Almighty God our favourable and carefull father: whom they that have not, let us suffer them to be troubled with carke and care. It ought to be our only care, how we may be voyde of care, and be found alwayes ioyfull in God: and mecke and of a patient minde toward men. So without doubt we shall trie that which David tried Psal. 37. 25. saying: *I have bene young and now am old, and yet saw I never the righteous forsaken, nor his seede begging their bread.* And that which he saith Psal. 40. *The Lord careth for me.* But in all things let your requestes be shewed unto God in prayer and supplication with giving of thanks. In these words the Apostle teacheth, how our care is to be cast upon God, and the meaning of that which he saith is this. Only be not carefull, but if any thing chance, which may make you carefull (as indeed innumerable such are wont to come unto those that live in the world) so behave your selves, that ye attempt nothing at all with your care, whatsoever that shall be which chanceth unto you, but casting of care, turne your selves with prayer and supplication unto God, and desire him that he will bring to passe and finish that which your selves otherwise should in vaine have attempted with your care to accomplish. Howbeit desire this with giving of thanks, forasmuch as ye have such a God as hath care of you, and unto whom ye may safely commit all carke and care for you. But he that will not so behave himself when any thing hapneth, but will first weigh all things by his own reason, and order them according to his own iudgement, and so take to himselfe the care of his things, he shall wrap himselfe in innumerable discommodities, he shall loose all joy and quietnesse thereby, and yet shall prevaile nothing, but labour in vaine, and plunge himselfe so much more in troubles and miseries, that he shall not be able to escape out of them againe, which we learne daily both by our own and by other mens experience. Now that which Paul here admonisheth concerning prayer tendeth unto this end, lest that any man should neglect all things and commit them to God, and he himselfe sleep and do nothing at all, no not so much as once pray for them: for he that should use this slothfulnesse, albeit he were now quiet, shall easily be wrapped in cares, whereof he shall not be able to rid

and himself; we must doe our endravour and not sleep, and therefore it is that many things be incident, which are wont to bring carefulnesse, whereby we might be as it were compelled to pray unto God. Wherefore Paul hath not in vaine joynd together those two: *Be nothing carefull*; and: *In all things let your requests be shewed unto God in prayer and supplication with giving of thanks. Nothing* ~~and~~ *All* doe indeed greatly differ, howbeit the Apostle therefore put them together, that he might signifie that it cannot be, but that wany and innumerable things be incident, which are wont to bring care and care, but that in all them we ought to admit no carefulnesse, but alwayes shie unto prayer, and commit them all unto God, and desire of him those things wherof we have need. Now we must here see how our prayer must be framed, and what is the true manner of praying. The Apostle seteth downe four things, prayer, supplication, giving of thanks, and requests or petitions. Prayer is those words or speech, wherein as sometimes something is desired, so also other things are declared, as is the Lords prayer and the Psalmes. Supplication is, when the petition is urged or made more earnest by something, as when one prayeth for his father, or for some other thing which is deare and excellent unto him, as when we pray unto God by his mercy, by his Iohne, by his promise, by his name, &c. As Salomon Psalm. 132. *Lord remember David and all his troubles.* And Paul Rom. 12. *I beseech you by the mercies of God.* And 1 Cor. 10. *I beseech you by the meeknesse and gentlenesse of Christ,* &c. A petition or request is, when we name that which is desired, and for which prayer and supplication is made, as in the Lords Prayer, all that composition of words is called prayer, but those seaven things for which we pray, as hallowed be thy name, thy kingdome come, &c. are petitions. According to that saying Matthe. 7. *Aske, and it shall be given you; seeke, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For whosoever asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.* Giving of thanks is when the benefites of God are rehearsed, whereby faith in God is strengthened, and stirred up so much more confidently to look for that which is desired, and for which we doe pray. Wherefore prayer urgeth or earnestly asketh by supplication, but is strengthened and made sweet and acceptable by giving of thanks, and so by this strength and sweetnesse it prevailleth, and obtaineth whatsoever it asketh. This manner of prayer we read to have been used in the Church, and among the holy fathers of the old Testament, which were wont alwayes in their prayers to aske with supplication and giving of thanks. The same also we see in the Lords Prayer, which beginneth with giving of thanks and with praise, when as even in the

the beginning thereof we confesse God a father, unto whom the godly mind hath access by his fatherly love, and by the love of his son, unto which supplication nothing may be compared, wherefore it is both the best & most excellent prayer of all which may be had. Moreover in these words *Paul* hath very wel expressed the myserie of the golden censer in the old Testament, whereof we read many things in the booke of *Moses*. it was lawful for the Priests only to burn incense; now all we which believe in Christ, are Priests, wherefore it is lawful for all us, and for us only to burne the incense of prayers. The censer that golden vessell, is the words which we utter in prayer, surely golden and precious, as those are, whereof the Lords prayer consisteth, the Psalmes and other prayers of the Scripture. For commonly in the Scripture vessells signifie words, for that our meanings are contained in words as in of a vessell, and by words are uttered and received as out of a vessell, as wine, Water, burning coles, and such like, are contained in vessells, and taken out of vessells, So by the cup of *Babylon Apoc 17.* the doctrine of men is understood, and by the cup wherein the blood of Christ is drunk the Gospel. Furthermore burning coles, whereupon the frankincense was laid, signifie giving of thanks, and rehearsing of benefits in prayer, which we are wont to doe in making supplication. For, that by fiery coles benefits are signified it is manifest even out of the 12. to the *Rom.* where the Apostle reciteth the saying of *Salomon Prov. 25.* *If thine enemy hunger, feed him: if he thirst, give him drinke: for in so doing, thou shalt heap coles of fire on his head.* And benefits may be rightly called coles of fire, forasmuch as they inflame the heart with love, although it be cold. In the law it was prohibited to lay the frankincense upon any other coles, but them that were of the altar of the Lord, which signifieth, that we must not rehearse our own good deeds in prayer, as that *Pharisee* did *Luke 13.* but only the benefits of God bestowed upon us in Christ. He is our altar, by him we must offer, for the benefits received by him we must give thanks, and make mention of them in prayer for the increasing of our faith. This *Paul* teacheth *Colos. 3.* where he saith: *Doe all things in the name of the Lord Iesus, giving thanks to God the Father by him.* For God cannot suffer, that thou shouldest glory in any thing else in his sight, which he declared in a type or figure *Leuit. 24.* where we read that *Nadab* and *Abihu* the sonnes of *Aaron* were taken and consumed of the flame from the Altar of God, because they burned incense to king other fire then of the altar of the Lord. The workes of Christ only are acceptable to God, wherefore for these only we must both give thanks & rejoyce in prayer. The incense signifieth the Petitions made in prayer. For petitions are, whereof prayer consisteth, and which ascend unto God, according

ing as Paul saith: *Let your petitions be shewed unto God*; wherein he seemeth to have considered and interpreted them as a savour ascending from the censer. Although he had said: when yee will burne incense sweet and acceptable unto the Lord, make, that your petitions be shewed unto God with supplication and giving of thanks, this incense and this savour as it is most sweet unto God, so doth it ascend straight unto heaven, like vapours of smoke, and encreaseth even unto the throne of God. And as burning coles doe give a strong savour and make it ascend upward: so the memory of the benefits of God, which we rehearse by giving of thanks, and whereof we doe as it were advertise God and our selves both, make prayer stedfast and bold, which cheerfully and gladly ascendeth into heaven, without which truly prayer fainteth, is cold and of no force. Wherefore whosoever thou art, before thou pray with faith and effectually, thy heart must be inflamed with the memory of the benefits, which God hath bestowed upon us in Christ. But perhaps some man will demand, how our petitions be shewed or become manifest unto God, seeing that they be not only known unto him before we pray, but he also doth send us that, which we aske? Whereunto I answer: the Apostle adjoyned this, that he might teach, of what sort true prayer ought to be, to wit, assured and having confidence and trust in God, which passeth not away into the wind, neither is made at adventure, as their prayer is, which pray, and have no regard whether God heare or not, yea rather believe that he doth not heare, which undoubtedly is not to pray or to aske of God, but to tempt and mock God. For if any man did desire money of me, whom I certainly knew, not to perswade himself that he should receive it, I could not suffer such an asker, of whom I might assure my self to be mocked: how much more is God offended at our much crying out & babbling, when we do continually babble much & cry out and doe not think at all whether he heareth us. Learn therefore here that thy petitions must be shewed unto God clearly, that thou must so aske, that thou doubt not, that thy petitions be known and accepted of God, and believe certainly that thou shalt obtaine whatsoever thou dost aske, with which faith if thou be endued, it shall so come unto thee indeed. For as we believe, so it cometh unto us. Wherefore, as the smoke carrieth savour upward from the censer: so faith carrieth the petitions of the believers into the sight of God, whereby we assuredly believe that our petitions shall come unto God, and that we shall undoubtedly obtaine those things that wee aske. Paul by these words [*be shewed*] did undoubtedly meane that, which is expressed in the Psalmes: *God hath heard my petition, Give a care Lord unto my prayer*, and such like, *Heereof Cantab. speaketh.*

*Marth.*

*Math. 21. and Mar. 11. Whatsoever ye shall aske in prayer, if ye believe, ye shall receive it. And James saith chap. 1. Aske in such and manner, not for be that wavereth shall receive nothing of the Lord.* Who may not now heereof perceive, that that much babbling, and crying out, which is made commonly through the world in monasteries, is a mocking, and deluding of God? The prayers of these, if they may be called prayers, are abundantly shewed before men, for they cry out and bable too much, but there is no regard of them with God, they are not known of him, neither come they unto his eares, that is, he doth by no meanes heare them, for that they do not believe, nor are assured, that their crying out or much babbling is heard of God, wherefore as they believe, so do they receive. It was time therefore long since, that those mockings & blasphemies of God should be abolished. But if we pray as we are here taught, there shall be nothing surely which we may not obtaine. Now we pray for many things continually, and receive nothing, neither is it any marvell, seeing we pray so, that our petitions be not shewed unto God, for that we doe not believe that they be manifest unto him. Wor to our confidence and incredulitie. *And the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall preserve your hearts and minds in Christ Iesus.* In how goodly an order doth Paul here instruct a Christian man? First he teacheth him to be glad and joyfull in the Lord by faith; secondly to shew himself meeke and gentle to all his neighbours. And if thou say, how can I do that without losse or hindrance? he answereth the Lord is at hand. If thou againe object: But what if men persecute me, and even bereave of that I have? He addeth: be nothing carefull, but let thy petitions be shewed unto God. Where is the flesh againe murmur, what if in the meane season I be oppressed and spoiled? he concludeth that there shall be nothing lesse, the peace of God shall preserve and keep thee, whereof I must now intreat somewhat. By the peace of God, is not meant here, that peace, whereby God is peaceable and quiet in himself, but that which he giveth unto us, and poureth into our hearts, even as also it is called the word of God which he giveth us, that we may preach it and believe in it. So when he giveth this peace unto us, it is called the peace of God, even because we have the same with him, when in the world men withstanding we suffer affliction. Now this peace passeth all understanding, reason, and knowledge of man, which is not to be understood, although man cannot at all perceive or know it, for if we have peace with God, truly it must be felt in our heart, and conscience, otherwise our hearts and minds could not be preserved by it, but it is hard to be understood. When tribulation cometh upon them, which know not to flee unto God with prayer and supplication.

supplication; but trust to their own wisdom and care, whereby they  
 seek peace, but that which is reason is able to know, which is that,  
 whereby tribulation taketh an end, and is changed with outward  
 tranquillitie: this peace doth not passe reason, but is agreeable un-  
 to it, inasmuch as it is sought and found out of it. Wherefore they  
 that are void of faith are exceedingly disquieted, and troubled un-  
 till according to the reason of the flesh they obtain this peace by  
 hardly avering or ridding themselves of adversity, not regarding  
 whether they bring that to passe by force or by craft, as he that hath  
 received a wound seeketh to have it healed, &c. But they that re-  
 joyce sincerely in the Lord; it is sufficient for them, that they know  
 that they have God favourable unto them, and have assured peace  
 with him, they abide willingly in tribulation, being nothing care-  
 full for that peace of reason by the removing of outward troubles,  
 but they endure them valiantly, looking to be strengthened inward-  
 ly by faith, taking no care whether the adversities which they suffer,  
 shall remaine a short or a long time, whether they shall be temporall  
 or continuing, neither are disquieted with caring what end they shall  
 have. They commit all things to God, seeking not to know, when,  
 how, where, or by whom he will give them quietnesse. Wherefore  
 God againe sheweth them this favour, that he maketh the end of  
 their triall to be such, and with so great commoditie, as no man  
 could either suspect or wish for. Lo, this is that peace of the crosse,  
 the peace of God, the peace of conscience, true Christian peace,  
 which maketh that a man outwardly also, as much as is in him, li-  
 veth quietly and peaceably with all men, and troubleth no man.  
 This peace, reason is not able by any means to know or compre-  
 hend, that a man under the crosse may have quietnesse of mind and  
 joy of heart, and peace even in the very invasion of his enemies; this  
 is the gift and worke of God known to none, but to him that hath  
 it, and hath tried it. Whereas *Paul* said: *Now 16: God of hope fill*  
*you with all joy and peace in believing*, Rom. 15. 13. That which he  
 calleth in these words peace in believing, he calleth in our present  
 text the peace of God. More over *Paul* signifieth in these words, that  
 whosoever will rejoyce in the Lord by faith, and be meek and of a  
 patient mind toward all by love, the Diuell undoubtedly is a-  
 gainst him, and will raise up some crosse, that he may drive him from  
 to Christian a purpose, wherefore the Apostle will have every one  
 to be prepared against this assault of Satan, and to place his peace  
 there where Satan cannot trouble it, namely in God, and not thinke  
 how he may cast off the crosse, but suffer the adversarie to take on,  
 and rape as he list, he in the meane season patiently looking for the  
 Lord, that he coming may make an end of adversitie and trouble.



for by this meanes his mind, heart, and conscience are preserved and kept in peace. Neither can patience endure, where the heart is not confirmed with this peace, for that he only which hath this peace doth thoroughly perswade himself that God is favourable unto him, and carefull for him, and maketh no accompt what chaunceth unto him from creatures. Moreover let no man understand here the hearts and minds to be the will and knowledge of nature, but as *Paul* himself interpreteth, the hearts and minds in Christ Iesus, that is, such as we have in Christ, of Christ, and under Christ. These are the hearts and minds which faith and love cause, with which they that be endued, doe behave themselves most godly towards God, and most lovingly and gently toward their neighbour. Toward God they so behave themselves, that they beleeve in him, and love him with their whole heart, and are also most ready, with their whole heart and with all their cogitations to doe those things which shall be acceptable to God and their neighbours, as much as, yea more then they are able. Such hearts and minds the Diuell goeth about with the feare of death and other troubles to terrifie and drive from this godlinesse, erecting a false hope, there against by the devises and imaginations of men, wherewith the mind is seduced, that it may seek to be comforted and holpen of it self or other creatures, which if it doe, surely he hath drawn such a man from the care of God, and wrapped him in his own vaine care. Thus hast thou godly Reader, out of this short text a most plentifull instruction of Christian life, how thou must live toward God and thy neighbour, namely that thou must beleeve that God is all things unto thee; and thou againe must be all things unto thy neighbours, that thou must shew thy self such a one to thy neighbour as God hath shewed himselfe unto thee that thou must receive of God and give to thy neighbour: All which are contained in faith and love, the whole sum of all Christianity. The 20. Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, concerning them that be under the Law, and them that be under Grace. [Gal. 4. Verse 1. to the 7.] Then I say, that she live as long, &c.

**T**His text toucheth the very pith of *Pauls* chiefe doctrine, the cause why it is well understood of so few, is not, for that it is so obscure and hard, but because there is almost no knowledge of faith left in the world, without which it cannot be that one should rightly understand *Paul*, who every where intreateth of faith with such force of the spirit as he is able. I must therefore speak somewhat, that this text may be made plain, and that I may more conveniently bring light unto it in exponning it, I will speak a few words in manner of a preface. First therefore we must understand that that treatise, wherein is intreated of good workes, doth farre differ from that

that wherein is intreated of justification, as there is very great difference between the substance and the working, between a man and his worke. Now justification is of man, and not of worke: for man is either iustified and saved, or judged and condemned, and not worke. Neither is it in controversie among the godly, that man is justified by no worke, but righteousness must come unto him from some otherwhere, then from his own worke. For *Moses* writeth of *Abell* after this sort: *The Lord had respect unto Abell, and to his oblation.* First he had respect to *Abell* himself, then to his oblation; because that *Abell* was first counted righteous, entire, and acceptable unto God, and then for his sake his oblation also was allowed, and not he because of his oblation. Again, God had no respect to *Cain*, and therefore neither to his oblation: where again thou seest, that regard is had first of the worker then of the worke. Of this place it is very plainly gathered, that no worke can be allowed of God, whereas he which worketh that worke, was not first acceptable to him: and againe, that no worke is disallowed of him, unless the author thereof be disallowed before. I thinke that these things will be sufficient concerning this matter in this place, of which it is easie to understand, that there are two sorts of worke: some going before justification, and some following it, and that these last are good worke indeed, but that those other doe only appeare to be good. Hereof commeth such disagreement between God, and those counterfeite holy ones, for this cause Nature and Reason rise and rage against the holy Ghost; this is that, wherof almost all the whole Scripture intreateth. The Lord in his word defineth, that all worke that go before justification, are evill, and of no importance, and requireth that man himself before all things be iustified. Again, he pronounceth al men, which are yet regenerate, and have not changed that nature, which they received of their parents, with the new creature of Christ, to be unrighteous and wicked, according to that saying *Psal. 116. All men are liars,* that is, unable to performe their duty, and to doe those things, which by right they ought. And *Gen. 6. The heart of man is alwayes ready unto evill,* whereby undoubtedly it commeth to passe, that he is able to doe nothing that is good, which hath the fountaine of actions, that is his heart, corrupted. And if he doe many worke which in outward shew seem good, they are no better then the oblation of *Cain*. Here against commeth forth Reason, our reverend mistres, seeming to her self marvelous wise, yet indeed is unwise and blind, & is not ashamed to gainsay her God, and to reprove him of lying, she being furnished with her follies and very strawie armour, to wit, the light of nature, free will, the strength of nature, also with the bookes of the heathen, and with the doctrines

of men. She dareth with her euill sounding strings make a noyse against God, that the workes of a man even not yet iustified, are good workes, and not workes like unto *Cains*, (which God pronounceth) yea, and so good, that he that worketh them is iustified by them. For so *Aristotle* hath taught, that he that worketh well is made good. Vnto this saying she leaneth and sticketh unmoveably, and wrestleth the Scripture cleane contrary, contending that God will have respect first to the workes, then to the worker. Such very diuellish doctrine beareth the sway now every where in schooles, colledges and monasteries, wherein no other Saints, then *Cain* was, have rule and authoritie. Now of this error another immediately springeth. They which attribute so much to workes, and doe not accordingly esteeme the worker and sound iustification, goe so farre, that they ascribe all meritt and soveraign righteousnesse to workes done before iustification, making almost no account of faith, alleadging that which *Jam*s saith, that without workes it is dead. Which sentence of the Apostle when they little understand, they attribute almost nothing to faith, they alwayes stick to workes, whereby they thinke they doe meritt exceedingly of God, and are perswaded that for their workes sake they shall obtaine the favour of God, and by this means doe they continually disagree with God, shewing themselves to be the right posterity of *Cain*. God hath respect unto man, these to the workes of man: God alloweth the works for his sake that worketh, these require that for the workes sake the worker may be crowned. Now God goeth not from his sentence, as it is meet and just, and these will seeme nothing lesse then to erre in any respect. They will not have their good workes contemned, reason to be nothing esteemed, free will to be counted uneffectuall, or surely, if thou dost here strive against them, they begin to be angry with God and count it a small matter to kill their brother *Abel*. But here perhaps thou wilt say: what is needfull to be done? by what means shall I first of all become righteous, and acceptable to God? How shall I attain to this perfect iustification? The Gospell answereth, preaching that it is necessary that thou heare Christ, and repose thy selfe wholly in him, denying thy selfe, and distrusting all thine owne strength. By this meanes thou shalt be changed from *Cain* to *Abel*, and being thy self acceptable, shalt offer acceptable gifts to the Lord. This saith, as it is preached unto thee for no merit of thine owne, so is it given unto thee for no deserving of thine, but of meere grace. And this faith iustifieth thee, thou bring endued herewith the Lord remitteth all thy sinnes, and that by the contemplation of Christ his Sonne whom this faith believeth and trusteth. Moreover he giveth unto such a faith his spirit, which doth thoroughly change a man and make

make him new, so that now he hath other reason, and another will, then before, namely that which is ready unto good. Such a one worketh nothing but good workes, neither can it be but good, which he being good before, shall doe, whereof I have spoken somewhat before. Wherefore nothing else is required, unto iustification, then to heare Iesus Christ our Saviour and to believe in him, howbeit neither of these is the worke of nature, but only of grace. He therefore that goeth about to attaine hereunto by works, shutteth the way to the Gospell, to faith, grace, Christ, God, and all things that helpe unto salvation. Againe, unto good workes there is need only of iustification, which he that hath attained, doth worke only good workes, and beside such a one, none. Hereof it sufficiently appeareth, that the beginning, the things following, and the order of mans salvation are after this sort. First of all is required, that thou heare the word of God, next that thou believe, then that thou doe worke, and so at the last become saved and happy. He which changeth this order, without doubt is not of God. Paul also describeth this order, saying, Rom 10. *Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved. But how shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? and how shall they heare without a Preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?* Therefore Christ teacheth us to pray the Lord of the Harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his Harvest, that is, sincere Preachers. When we heare these preach the true word of God, we may believe, which faith iustificeth a man, and maketh him Godly indeed, that he now calleth upon God, in the spirit of the sonnes, and worketh nothing but that which is good, and thus becometh a man saved. Which is no other thing, then if I say: He that believeth shall be saved. Againe, he that worketh without faith is condemned, as Christ saith: He that doth not believe shall be condemned, from which no workes shall deliver him.

Confer now herewith those things which are wont commonly to be spoken of honesty and righteousness. Are they not wont thus to say? I will endeavour, that I may yet become honest. It is meet surely that we study to lead an honest life and to doe good workes. Well, admit this to be so. But if one then aske them how we may apply our selves unto honesty, and by what meanes we may attaine unto it: they answer, that we must fast, pray, frequent temples, avoyde sins &c. Whereupon one becometh a Charterhouse Monke, another chooseth some other order of monkes: another is consecrated a Priest: some torment their flesh by wearing of hayre cloath: others scourge their bodies with whips, others afflict themselves after other sorts. But these are even of Cains broode, and their workes are nowhit better then the workes of Caine. For the man himselfe continueth

the same that he was before, ungodly, and without all justification there is a certain change made only of outward workes, of apparel, of places &c. Neither are these any other then very apes of Saints, for they doe preposterously imitate the manner and workes of Saints, when as they themselves are nothing lesse then Saints. They scarce think of faith, they presume only of such workes as seeme good unto themselves, thinking by them to come unto Heaven. Of whom Christ said, enter in at the straight gate: for I say unto you, many seeke to enter in at it, and cannot. Why is this? because they know not what this narrow gate is. For it is faith, which doth altogether annihilate or make a man nothing in his owne eyes, and requitteth that he put no trust in any of his owne workes, but that he leane only to the grace of God, and be prepared for it to leave and suffer all things. But those holy ones of Caines broode think their good workes to be the narrow gate, and are not therefore extenuated, or made lesse whereby they might enter: they doe not leave confidence in their workes, but gather them together in great coules, they hang them about them, and so goe about to enter in being burdened, and as it were swollen bigge, which is as possible for them, as for a Cammell with his bunched back to go through the eye of a needle. When thou shalt begin to preach unto these of faith, they laugh and bristle at thee: Dost thou count us, say they, for Turkes and Heathen, whom it becometh now first to learne faith? Is there such a company of Priests, Munkes and Nunnes, and is not faith known? Who knoweth not what he ought to beleeeve? even manifest sinners know that. And being after this sort animated and stirred up, they think that they be abundantly endued with faith, and that the rest is now to be finished and made perfect by workes. Whereupon they make to small & slender account of faith, as I have said, because they be ignorant both what faith is and that it alone doth iustifie. They call it faith, when they beleeeve those things which they have heard of Christ, which kinde of faith the Devils also have, and yet are nothing therefore justified: but this diserveth to be called rather an opinion of men then faith. For as we doe often times admonish, it is not sufficient, that thou mayest worthily be called a Christian, to beleeeve those things to be true, which are preached of Christ. Which kind of faith they of Caines broode also have: but thou must also nothing doubt, that thou art of the number of them. unto whom all those benefits of Christ are given and exhibited. Which he that beleeveth, must plainly confesse, that he is holy, godly, righteous, the sonne of God, and certaine of salvation, and that by no meritt of his own, but by the only mercy of God poured forth upon him for Christes sake. Which he beleeveth to be so rich

rich & plentiful, as it is indeed, that although he be as it were drowned in sins, he is notwithstanding thereby made holy, and the son of God. Wherefore if he should any thing doubt, he should procure exceeding ignomie and reproach to baptism which he hath received, and to the Lords supper, and also reprove the word and grace of God of falshood. Wherefore take heed that thou nothing doubt, that thou art the sonne of God, and therefore righteous by his grace, let all feare and care be here away. Howbeit thou must feare and tremble that thou mayest persevere such a one unto the end: Thou must not being in this case, be carefull that thou mayest become righteous and saved, but that thou mayest persevere and continue. Neither must thou doe this, as though it consisteth in thine owne strength, for all thy righteousness and salvation is of only grace, whereunto only thou must trust: But when thou knowest that it is of grace alone, and that thy faith is also the gift of God, thou shalt for good cause live in feare and care, least that any temptation doe violently move thee from this faith. Hereupon pertained that which is written in the 9. chap. of Ecclesiastes: *The righteous and wise, yea and their servants also are in the hand of God, and there is no man that knoweth either love or hate, but all things are before them. It hapneth unto one as unto another, &c.* For the present time every one by faith is certain of our salvation, but constantly to stand and persevere as it is the gift of the Lord, and not in our owne strength, so ought we alwayes to have care and feare thereof. When they of Cains brood here faith to be encreased of after this sort, they cannot sufficiently marvell at our madnesse, as it seemeth unto them. God turne this way from me say they, that I should affirme my selfe holy and godly, farre be this arrogancie and rashnesse from me. I am many wayes a miserable sinner, I should be mad, if I should arrogate holinesse unto my selfe. And thus they mocke at true faith, and count such doctrine as this for execrable error, and goe about with might and maine to extinguish the Gospell. These are they that deny the faith of Christ, and persecute it in the whole world; of whom Paul speaketh: *1. Tim. 4. In the latter times many shall depart from the faith, &c.* For we see it brought to passe by the meanes of these, that true faith lyeth every where oppressed, is not only not preached, but also commonly disallowed and condemned, with all them that either teach or professe it. The Pope, Bishops, Colledges, Monasteries, and Universties have now above five hundred yeares persecuted it with one minde and consent, yea and that marvelous slyly and obstinately, and have done no other thing unto the world, but everywhere as much as they were able driven many unto Hell. Which truly both hath bin and is at that last and most hurtfull persecution of Antichrist

rightist: The Lord at the last bring it to an end. If any object against the admiration or rather mad sensellinesse of these men, that we doe nothing but that that is meet, if we count our selves even holy, trusting to the goodnesse of Gods iustifying us, seeing that David prayed thus: *Preserue thou me O Lord, for I am holy.* Psal. 86. 2. And for that Paul saith: *The spirit of God beareth witness with our spirit that we are the Children of God.* They answer that the Prophet and Apostle would not teach us in these words, or give us an example, which we should follow, but that they being particularly and specially enlightened, received such revelation of themselves, that they were holy. And after this sort they misinterpret and wrest whatsoever place of Scriptures affirmeth that we are holy, saying that such Doctrines are not written for us, but that they are rather peculiar miracles and prerogatives as they call them, which do not belong to all. Which forced imagination we account of, as having come from their sick braine, who when as they themselves void of faith, and savour nothing of the spirit, think and contend, that there be none which have sound faith and the spirit, whereby surely they believe themselves to be thorns and thistles, not Christians but rather enemies and destroyers of Christians, and Persecutors of the Christiana faith. Again, they are of this belife, that they shall be righteous and holy by their own workes, and that because of them God will give unto them salvation and eternall blisshenesse. But here see the madnesse of men: in their opinion and iudgement it is a Christian thing to thinke that we shall be righteous and saved because of our workes, and to beleve that these things are given by the grace of God, they condemn as heretical. They attribute that to their own workes which they attribute not to the grace of God: they affirme that they doe save us, and yet this they trust to worker, they can not trust to Gods grace: which blindnesse worthily cometh upon them, inasmuch as they will not build upon the rock, let them build upon the sand, and so to be drowned by their own meanes, that by their own workes & satisfactions they may torment themselves even unto death, gratifying Satan herein for that they will not rest upon the grace of God, and serve the Lord with a gentle and sweet service. For they that are endued with true faith, and do rest upon the grace of the Lord, it is marvelous how they are in God by his goodnesse, of most quiet mindes, and greatly rejoicing with holy ioy, whereupon they doe also with pleasure apply themselves to good workes, not to such as these of Gaires brood doe, as to fasting, prayers, fasting, hase and filthy apparrell, and such like trifles, but to true and right good workes, whereby their neighbour is profited, and from whence no small commoditie redoundeth upon him. Moreover they are of most ready mindes to suffer whatsoever things, in

as much



asmuch as they are certaine that God doth fauour them, and hath a care of them. These are right honest and profitable men, of whom both God is glorified, and men much profited. When as those of Caines broode, serve to no use, either before God, or before men; no they doe not so much as profane themselves, but are only an unprofitable lump of earth, yea not only unprofitable, but exceeding pernicious and hurtful also both to themselves, and to others. For inasmuch as they are destitute of true faith, they cannot give unto God his due glory, nor doe those good workes which may truly profit their neighbour. For those workes, that they apply themselves unto, are their owne inventions, consisting in gestures, apparrell, places, times, meates and such like trifles, whereby this or that neighbour can be holpen neither in body, nor minde, nor in any thing else. For what can it profit me that thy crowne is shaven very broad, or that thou wearest a gray coule: what profit bringeth it, that thou fastest to day, and keepest holy day to morrow: that thou abstainest from this meate, and carest that: that thou remainest in this place: that thou readeest and mumblest up daily so many words? Surely thou dost nothing else by these, but torment thy selfe to please Satan, and to be a pernicious and hurtfull example to thy neighbour. For there is no Christianity in thy life being such thou beleevest as it behoueth a Christian to beleeve, and therefore neither dost thou pray Christianly: Thy fasting also is not true chastising of the body, but rashly taken upon thee instead of a good worke: In a summe, this thy seruice and study of religion is no other thing, then in yme past among the Iews was the religion of *Moloch* and *Baal*, in the honour of whom they did kil & burne even their own children. So pernicious & pestilent an example is this thy holynesse, which seemeth so godly unto thee, which when it more closely counterfaite a shew of godlinesse, it draweth miserable men to the following thereof, and utterly destroyeth the true religion. Here perhaps some godly person will obiect, if the matter be so, and our workes doe not serue us, but only to hinder Christ, and beleeve in him, whome we haue giuen unto us of the Father to be our righteousness and saluation, to what end then doe so many precepts giuen vnto us, and why doth God severely require that they be obeyed? The present text of the Apostle shall giue vnto us the solution of this question, and upon this fit occasion we will now enter vnto the exposition thereof. The Galatians being taught of Paul the faith of Christ, but afterwards seduced by false Apostles, thought that the matter of our saluation must be finished and made perfect by the workes of the law, said that only faith doth not suffice. These Paul gathereth back againe from workes vnto faith with great diligence, and words marvelous effectually, plainly proving

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that the workes of the law which goe before faith, doe make us only servants, & be of no importance to godlines & salvation but that faith doth make us the sons of God, & that from thence true good workes doe without constraint forthwith most plentifully flow. But here we must accustom our selves to the words of the Apostle: he calleth him a servant that is occupied in workes without faith, whereof we have already intreated at large: he calleth him a sonne, which is righteous and lively by faith alone, without workes. The reason hereof is this: this servant, although he apply himselfe to good workes, yet he doth it not with that mind, with which a son doth, that is with a mind that is free, willing, and certaine that the inheritance and all the good things of the Father are his: but doth it as he that is hired with a stipend in an other mans house, who hopeth not that the inheritance shall come unto him. The workes indeed of the sonne, and the servant are alike: and almost all one according to the outward appearance, but their mindes doe differ exceeding much, and their hope is nothing like, even as Christ himselfe saith: *The servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the sonne abideth for ever.* Job. 8. These of Calnes broode want the faith of sonnes, which they themselves confesse, for they think it a most absurd thing, and wicked arrogancy, to affirme themselves to be the sonnes of God and holy, therefore as they beleeve, even so are they counted before God, they never become the sonnes of God, or holy, nevertheless they are exercised with the workes of the law, and are well wearied, wherefore they are and remaine servants for ever. And they receive no other reward, but these temporall things namely, quietnesse of life, abundance of goods, dignitie and honours, &c. Which we see to be usuall among the followers of Popish religion, then whom there is none at this day that liveth more pleasantly, more wealthily, more gloriously and honourably. But this is their reward, they are servants and not sonnes, wherefore in death they shall be thrust from all good things, neither shall any portion of the eternall inheritance come unto them, who in this present life would beleeve nothing thereof. So therefore it is that servants and sonnes are not much unlike in workes, but in mind and faith they are most unlike. Now the Apostle endeavoureth here to prove, (which indeed is the very matter) that the law with all the workes thereof doth make us no other then servants, if this faith in Christ, whereof we have spoken, be away. For that alone doth make us the sonnes of God. Neither the law nor nature can give it, only the Gospell bringeth it, when it is heard with an holy silence of minde. It is the word of grace, which the holy Ghost doth forthwith follow, as it is shewed in very many places, and specially Acts 10. where we read, that the holy Ghost did by and by fall

fall on *Cornelius* and his familie hearing the preaching of *Peter*. Moreover the law was given for this, that we might learn by it, how void we are of grace, and how farre from being of the kind of sonnes; yea that we are plainly of a servile mind. For we being left to ourselves, can in no wise be free from the law, neither if we doe any good thing, doe it willingly, forasmuch as that faith of sonnes is wanting; wherewith he that is indued, knoweth assuredly, that the eternall inheritance shall come unto him, and is of his own accord inclined and bent, with a willing and ready spirit to doe those things that are good. Now these men doe willingly confesse that they are void of this faith, and if they would confesse the truth indeed they should also plainly confesse, that they had far rather be without all law, and that they are against their wills subiect therunto. Wherefore all things are among them constrained, and void of faith, and they are in very deed compelled to confesse that by the law they cannot attaine any further. Which one thing they ought to learne by the law, and know, that they are servants, and have nothing belonging to sonnes whereby they might be ashamed with desire to come from servitude to the state and condition of sonnes, and might take no account of their own things, as indeed they ought to doe, that God of his grace might advance them unto an other state by faith. Now this were a sound understanding of the law, and the true use thereof, wherof this is the office, to reprove and convince men hereof, that they are servants and not sonnes, as many as follow the law without faith, and that they doe exercise themselves therein plainly against their wills, and with no confidence of grace. For it causeth and maketh such to be offended at it, and thereby it how unprepared and unwilling they are to that which is good, inasmuch as they are void of faith, whereby it moveth them to seeke helpe some otherwhere and not to presume of their own strength to satisfie it. For it requireth a ready will, and hearts of sonnes, which alone can satisfie it: it utterly refuseth servants, and them that be unwilling. But these of *Cains* broode doe not only of their owne accord confesse that they want this faith, which maketh the sonnes of God, but also they persecute it: they seele and know also full well, how unwillingly they beare the law, and had rather to be free from it, nevertheless they think that they shall become righteous by these their unwilling & constrained works. They will continue servants, and will not be changed into sonnes, and yet they would enioy the goods of a strange father. They doe all things cleane out of order, whereas by the law they ought to learne, that they are servants, and unwilling to doe that which is good, and therefore should by faith aspire to the state of sonnes, notwithstanding they goe so far that they seele to satisfie and fulfill it by their own workes only. And thereby they doe altogether

ther hinder the end of the law, and strive against faith and grace, whereunto if they were not blinde, the law would direct and drive them: and so they continue alwayes a blind, blockish, and miserable people. These things *Paul* teacheth *Rom. 3.* and *7.* and doth freely pronounce that no man is iustified before God, by the workes of the law, ading no other cause heretof, then this, for that the knowledge of sinne only cometh by the law. If thou wilt know how this cometh to passe, consider well some one of *Sains* broode, and thou shalt by and by see it verified. First he worketh his workes according to the law, with great grieve and labour, and yet he therewith confesseth, that he is uncertaine whether he be the sonne of God, and holy. Yea he condemneth and curseth this faith, as the most pernicious arrogantie and error of all other, and will continue in his doubting, untill he be made certain by his workes. Here thou seest plainly that such a man is not good or righteous, seeing that he wanteth this faith and beliefe, that he is counted acceptable before God and his sonne, yea he is an enemy of this faith, and therefore of righteousness also: Wherefore neither can his workes be counted good, although they pretend a fair shew of fulfilling the law. And thus is it easie to understand that which *Paul* saith, that no man is iustified before God by the workes of the law. For the worker must be iustified before God, before he worketh any good thing, although before men, which esteeme a man by outward things, and not by the mind, they are counted righteous which apply themselves to the doing of good workes. For men iudge the worker by the workes, God iudgeth the workes by the worker. Now the first precept requireth, that we acknowledge and worship one God: that is, that we trust and rest in him alone, which indeed is the true faith, whereby we become the sonnes of God. But how easie is it by this precept to know, that sinne is both in him of *Sains* brood and in thy selfe, inasmuch as both of you want such a faith, even by your owne nature: which thou couldest not know but by meanes of this law. And this is that which *Paul* meaneth when he saith: *That by the law cometh the knowledge of sinne.* Now thou canst be delivered from this evill of infidelitic, neither by thine owne power, nor by the power of the law, wherefore all thy works whereby thou goest about to satisfie the law, can be nothing but workes of the law, of farre lesse importance, then that they are able to iustifie thee before God: who counteth them only righteous which truly believe in him, for they that only acknowledge him the true God, are his sonnes, and doe truly fulfill the law. But if thou shouldest even kill thy selfe with workes, yet is it so farre of, that thy heare can obtaine this faith thereby, that thy workes are even a hindrance that thou canst not know

know it, yea they are a cause that thou dost persecute it.

Hereupon it is, that he that studieth to fulfill the law without faith, is afflicted for the devils sake, and not for Gods sake, and continueth a persecutor both of faith and of the law, until he come unto himselfe, and doth plainly cease to trust in himselfe and in his own workes, doth give this glory to God, who justifieth the ungodly, acknowledgeth himselfe to be nothing, and sigheth for Gods grace, whereof he doth now know, being taught by the law, that he hath neede. Then faith and grace come and fill him being empty, satisfie him being hungry, by and by follow good workes which are truly good: Neither are they now the workes of the law, but of the spirit, of faith and grace, and they are called in the Scriptures the workes of God, which he worketh in us. For whatsoever we doe of our own power and strength, and is not wrought in us by his grace, without doubt it is a worke of the law, and availeth nothing to justification, but is both evill and hated of God, because of the infidelitie wherein it is done. Again, whatsoever he of Caines broode worketh, he doth nothing from his heart, nothing freely and with a willing mind, except he be as it were heired with some reward, or be commanded to doe some such thing, whereunto he ought otherwise to be readie of himselfe: Even as an evill and unthrifty servant suffereth himselfe to be brought to no worke, uples he be heired with a reward, or commanded, whereunto he ought otherwise to be willing of himselfe. Now how unpleasant is it to a man to have such servants? But they of Caines broode be plainly such, they would doe no good worke at all, if they were not either compelled by the feare of hell, or allured by the hope of present good things. Whereby againe thou seest, that these have no mind to the law, they gape only for gaine, or are moved with feare, whereby they bewray themselves that they do rather hate the law from their heart, and had lever that there were no law at all: Wherefore it is plainly manifest, that they are not good, and consequently that neither their workes be good: for how should evill men worke good workes? Moreover these their workes, which in apparence and shew, seeme to be good, are either wrested from them by feare, or are bought with promises. An evil heart can do nothing that is good. But this naughtinesse of the heart and unwillingnesse to doe good, the law bewrayeth when it teacheth, that God doth not greatly esteeme what the hand doth, but what the heart doth: which, seeing it hateth the law that is good, who will deny it to be most evill? Surely it is a sinne to be against the law, which is very good. Thus therefore sinne is known by the law, according as Paul teacheth, forasmuch as we learn thereby, how our affection is not set on that which is good, which ought to rectifie us  
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and drive us to cease to trust to our selves, and to long after the grace of God, whereby this naughty flesh of the heart may be taken away, and our mind may become such, as is of it self ready to good things, and loveth the law, which voluntarily, not for feare of any punishment, or respect of reward, but because it doth of it owne accord like well of the law, and love righteousnesse, worketh those things which are truly good: By this meane only one is made of a servant a sonne, of a slave an heire. Which mind and spirit thou shalt receive by no other meanes, then by faith in Christ, as it is before spoken at large. Now let us come to entreat of the text of Paul. [Vers. 1. *The heire as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant though he be Lord of all.*]

He propoundeth a similitude taken of the custom of men. For we see that the children, unto whom their parents have left some substance, be brought up no otherwise then if they were servants. They are fed and clothed with their goods, but they are not permitted to doe with them, nor to use them according to their own mind, but are ruled with feare and discipline of manners, that so even in their own inheritance they live no otherwise then as servants. After the same sort is it also in spiritual things. God made unto the elect a covenant, when he promised that it should come to passe that in the seed of Abraham, that is in Christ, all nations should be blessed, Gen. 22. That covenant was afterward confirmed by the death of Christ, and revealed and published abroad by the preaching of the Gospel. For the Gospel is no other thing, then an open and generall preaching of this grace, that in Christ blessing & grace is laid up for all men, which so many only shall receive as shall beleve. Now before that this covenant is truly opened and made manifest to men, the sonnes of God live after the manner of servants under the law, and are exercised with the workes of the law, although they cannot be iustified by them, inasmuch as they are servile and doe nothing availe to iustification as it is said before: Notwithstanding because they are even then predestinate to life, when they are after the manner of servants held under the law, they are true heires of heavenly good things, that is, of this blessing and grace of this covenant: albeit they as yet doe not know, or enjoy it, but are wearied with workes no otherwise then other that are void of faith. So at this day thou mayest find not a few, which now having faith, as they are the sonnes of God, so doe they also enjoy the grace of God in the liberty of sonnes, when as a little before being drowned in workes, they knew nothing at all of faith, being in all things like unto other hypocrites. Nevertheless, because they were before the foundation of the world appointed of God unto this faith and state of sonnes, they were even then the sonnes of God.

God before, when they were as yet altogether ignorant of faith. Where are some also which being as yet as it were drowned in works, are like to servants and those of *Cains* brood, who notwithstanding before God are sonnes and heires, which shall be brought unto the faith of sonnes, leaving the state of servants, and shall embrace the liberty and right of sonnes, shall cease from the workes of the law, and come unto the inheritance of justification, that being iustified by grace, they may worke freely those things that be good, to the glory of God, and commodity of their neighbours, being farre from all feare, or hope, as well of iustification, as of all other good things. For they shall then have and possesse it by the Covenant of the Father confirmed by Christ, and revealed, published, and as it were delivered into their hands by the Gospell, through the only grace and mercy of the Father. This Covenant both *Abraham* and all the fathers, which were endued with true faith, had no otherwise then we have, although before Christ was glorified, this grace was not openly published and preached. They lived in like faith, and therefore they obtained also like good things. They had the same grace, blessing and Covenant with us, for there is one Father, and the same God of all. Thou seest therefore that *Paul*, as almost in all other places so here also doth entreate much of faith, that we are not iustified by our workes, but by faith alone, whereby not certaine good things by peccemeate, but all good things at once doe come unto us. For there is no good thing, which this Covenant of God doth not containe in it. it giveth and bringeth righteousness, salvation, and God himselfe. Workes cannot be done at once, but by faith the whole inheritance of God is together received. From thence also good workes doe come, howbeit not meritorious, whereby thou mayest seek salvation, but which with a minde already possessing righteousness, thou must doe with great pleasure to the profit to thy neighbours. For thou shalt now have need of nothing, being endued with faith, which bringeth all things, yea surely more things then one dare wish, muchiesse can deserve: wherefore it is no marvell if such work all things freely, and so doe unto their neighbour, as they both believe and rejoyce, that God of his goodnesse and by the merit of Christ hath done unto them. What reward shall they hope for which already have all things? the shadow whereof those most miserable ones of *Cains* broode seeke by their workes, but they shall never finde it, they follow it but they shall never come unto it.

Verse 2. *But is under Tutors and Governours untill the time appointed of the Father.* Tutors and Governours are they which doe bring up the heire and so rule him, and order his goods, that neither he wast his inheritance by riotous living, neither his goodnesse otherwise

wise perish or be consumed. They permit him not to use his goods at his own will or pleasure, but suffer him to enjoy them as they shall be needfull and profitable unto him. First whereas they keepe him at home, and informe him with good manners, what doe they else but prepare and instruct him, whereby he may most commodiously and long enjoy his inheritance? Again, the most straightly and severely they bring him up, so much greater desire they stirre up and enflame in him to come to, and enjoy his inheritance. For as soone as he beginneth to be of any discretion and iudgement, it cannot be but grievous unto him, to live at the commandment and will of another. After the same sort standeth the case of the elect, which are brought up and instructed under the law, as under a Master, to the libertie of the sonnes. First the law profiteth them in this, that by the feare of it, and of the punishment which it threatneth, they are driven from sin, at the least from the outward work, lest that the libertie of sinning encrease overmuch, and remove them from all religion of God, that hope of salvation being past, and God quite condemned, they should runne headlong without all feare into all kindes of evill, as some desperate persons are wont to doe. Again, the law is profitable to them in this, that by it they are brought unto knowledge of themselves, and learne how unwillingly they live under the law, and that they doe no good at all with a willing and ready minde as it becometh sonnes, but with a servile and unwilling minde: whereby they may easily see, what is the root of this evill, and what is especially needfull unto salvation, to wit, a new and a willing spirit to that which is good. Which surely neither the law, nor the workes of the law, are able to give, yea the longer and the more that they apply themselves unto them, so much more unwilling shall they finde themselves, and with so much more griefe to worke those things that are good. Hereupon now they learne, that they doe not satisfie the law, although outwardly they live according to the prescript rule thereof: for as they doe pretend to obey it in worke, so in mind they doe hate it, wherefore in mind also they remaine sinners, although they pretend themselves righteous by workes, that is, they are like unto those of Cains brood, and to hypocrites, whose hand indeed is compelled to good, but they have a heart, which as it is an enemy to the law, so doth it verily consent unto sinnes, and is miserably subject unto them. To know this concerning themselves is not the lowest degree to salvation. Hereof also we may see, how fitly *Paul* calleth such constrained workes the workes of the law. For they flow not from a ready and willing heart, but are enforced by the law, the heart declining another way. Howbeit the law doth not require works alone, but much rather



much rather the heart it self, so that we might say, not only the works but rather the heart of the law : not only the hands of the law, but rather the mind, will, and all the strength of the law. Whereupon it is said in the first Psalm of the blessed man : *But his delight is in the law of God, and in his law doth he exercise himself day and night.* Such a mind the law requireth indeed, but it giveth it not, neither can it give it of it own nature, whereby it commeth it passe, that while the law continueth to exact it of a man, and to condemne him as long as he hath not such a mind, as disobedient to God, he is in anguish on every side, his conscience is grievously terrified and without all counsell and help. Then indeed he is most readie for grace, and this is that time appointed of the Father, when his servitute shall end, and he should enter into the state of the sonnes. For being thus in distresse and terrified, seeing that by no other meanes he can avoid the condemnation of the law, he turneth himself wholly to pray to the Father for grace, he acknowledgeth his frailtie, he confesseth his sinne, he ceaseth to trust in works, and doth altogether, as it is meet, humble himself, perceiving now full well, that between him and a manifest sinner there is no difference at all but of works, that he hath a wicked heart, even as every other sinner hath. Yea it may be that such hypocrites doe far more hate the law in their heart, then those famous sinners, which are even as it were drowned in sinnes. For while these are even wearied with the works of sinnes, and doe trie the filthines of them, it often times cometh to passe, that they doe in some part loath and dresse them, when as those righteous ones doe alwaies think those things that they have not tried, to be more sweet, neither can they beleve that there is so much gall in sinnes, whereof they are by nature inflamed with such a desire, and therefore as they doe more earnestly love sinne, so consequently they doe much worse hate the law, which as a certaine school-master, is alwayes against their desire. Moreover, forasmuch as the condition of mans nature is such, that it is able to give to the law, works only, and not the heart, who doth not see how greatly it is condemned of us ? An unequall division truly, to dedicate the heart, which doth incomparably excell all other things, to sinne, and the brutish hand to the law : which is nothing else, but to offer chaff to the law, and the wheat to sinne : the shell to God, and the kernell to Satan. So that cometh to passe which is in the Gospel, that the wickednesses of him, which is in thy judgement a desperate sinner, are counted as a more : and thine, which so playest the hypocrite, are counted as a beame. If this evill be added hereunto, that such hypocrites doe not see a beame in their eye, but being blinded, doe persevere in their accustomed works, not marking this their inward abomination of the heart, they by and by burst forth to judge and condemne others, they

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disperse sinners, as he did in the Gospel, they think themselves not like unto them, they are not as other men are, they think themselves alone godly and righteous. Whose ungodlinesse if one reprove, and as it is meer, bewray, they by and by are in a rage and fury, and stick not to kill innocent *Abel*, and to persecute all those that follow the truth. And they will seem to doe that to defend good works, and to obtaine righteousness, neither doe they promise to themselves a small reward for this, inasmuch as they doe, as they say, persecute hereticks, blasphemers, them which be seduced and doe seduce with mischievous error, which labour to seduce and pluck even them from good works. Here thou mayest see that that sheweth it self, whatsoever the Scriptures attribute to these men being surely most peccant spirits, to wit, that they are a generation of Vipers, and Serpents. They are no other but of *Cains* brood, and so they do continue, servants they are, and servants they doe remaine. But they whom God hath chosen *Abels* and sonnes, do learne by the law, how unwilling a heart they have unto the law, they fall from their arrogancie, and are by this knowledge of themselves which the Law bringeth, brought even unto nothing in their own eyes. Then by and by cometh the Gospel, and lifteth them up being humbled, whereby the Lord giveth his grace unto them thus casting down themselves, and endueth them with faith. Hereby they receive that covenant of the eternall blessing, and the holy Ghost, which reneweth their heart, that now it is delighted with the Law, hateh sinne, and is willing and readie to doe those things that are good: And here now thou mayst see not the works, but the heart of the law. And this is the very time appointed to the heire of the Father, when he must be no longer a servant but a sonne, and doth now begin to be led by a free spirit, being no more kept in subiection under Tutors and Governours, after the manner of a servant. Which is even that that *Paul* teacheth in the words following. [*Verse 3. Even so, when we were children, were in bondage under the rudiments of the world.*] By the word rudiments, thou mayest understand here the first principles or law written, which are as it were the first exercises and instructions of holy learning, whereof it is spoken also *Heb. 5.* As concerning the time ye ought to be teachers, yet have ye need againe that we teach you what are the first principles or rudiments of the word of God. And *Colos. 2.* Beware lest there be any that spoyle you through philosophie and vaine deceits, through the traditions of men, according to the rudiments of the world. Again *Gala 4.* How turne ye againe unto impotent and beggerly rudiments, whereunto as from the beginning yee will be in bondage againe? ye observe dayes and moneths, &c. Here as it were in contempt he calleth the Law rudiments, he addeth also, impotent, and beggerly, both because it is not able to performe that righteousness

ousnesse which it requireth, and also for that it maketh men indeed poore and impotent. For whereas it earnestly requireth a heart and mind given to godlines, and nature is not able to satisfie it herein, it plainly maketh man to feeble his povertry, and to acknowledge, his infirmities, that that is by right required of him, which he not only hath not, but also is not able to have. Hereunto pertaineth that which Paul hath left writteth. 2. Cor. 3. *The Letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.*

Moreover Paul calleth them the rudiments of the World, for that al that observing of the law, which men not yet renewed by the Spirit doe perform, doth consist in worldly things, to wit, in places, times, apparell, persons, vessels, and such like. But faith resteth in no worldly thing, but in the only grace, word, and mercy of God, neither doth it make a man righteous and safe by any outward thing, but only by the invisible and eternall grace of God: Wherefore it counteth alike, dayes meares, persons, apparell, and all things of this world. For none of these by it self doth either further or hinder godlines and salvation, as it doth the righteousness of those of Cains brood, which is as it were tyed to those outward things. Faith therefore deserveth nothing lesse then to be called the rudiments of the world, by which we obtaine the fulnesse of heavenly good things: and albeit it be occupied also in outward things, yet is it addicted to no outward thing, but doth freely in all things, that which it seeth may be done to the glory of God, and profit of our Neighbour, alwayes continuing free and the same, and yet is made all things to all men, that so the conversation thereof may want all peculiar respect and difference. With those of Cains brood it agreeth neither in name nor in any thing: one of them eateth flesh, another abstaineth from it: one weareth black apparell, another white: one keepeth this day holy, another that: every one hath his rudiments, under which he is in bondage: all of them are addicted to the things of the world, which are fraile and perish in an houre. Wherefore they are no other but servants of the rudiments of the world, which they call holy orders, godly ordinances, and wayes to go to heaven. against these Paul speaketh Colos. 2. *Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why as though ye lived in the world, are ye burdened with traditions? As, touch not, Taste not, Handle not: which all perish with the using, and are after the commandements and doctrines of men. Which things have indeed a shew of godlines, when as they are mere superstition, whereby the minde is in vain pressed downe to these outward things. &c.* By this and other places above mentioned it is plaine, that all Monasteries and Colledges, whereby we measure the state of spirituall men as we call them, doe plainly disagree with the Gospell, and Christian liberty, and that therefore it is much more dangerous to live in these kindes of life, then a-

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mong most prophane men. For all their things are nothing but rudiments, and ordinances of the world, consisting in the difference and use of appartell, place, times, and other present things, whereunto seeing they are so addicted, that that hope by them to attain righteousnes and salvation, faith is made no account of amongst them, neither are they Christians but in name, wherefore all their life and holines, is meere sinne, and most detestable hypocrisie. It is needfull therefore, that they that are occupied in such ordinances, should above all other men most diligently look unto themselves, that they trust not to these ordinances, that they be not too much addicted unto them, but that they doe persevere in a free faith, which is tyed to none of these outward things, but resteth in the only grace of God. For the faire shew of life and fained holines, which is in those ordinances, doth with a marvelous and secret force withdraw from faith, more then those manifest and grosse sinnes, whereof open sinners are guilty, and doth easily make men such as *Paul* here speaketh of: *When we were children, we were in bondage under the rudiments of the World*, that is, when we were as yet ignorant of faith, and were exercised only with the workes of the Law, we did those outward workes of the law, consisting in worldly things, but with an unwilling mind, and with no faith, hoping that by these rudiments of the world we should obtaine salvation, wherefore we were no other then servants. Now this false and servile opinion, faith alone taketh away, and teacheth us to trust unto, and rest upon the only grace of God, whereby at once is given freely that which is needfull to work all things. For these workes of the law, if that false opinion were away, were not ill of themselves. [Verse 4. *But when the fulnesse of time was come, God sent forth his sonne made of a woman, and made under the law.* Verse 5. *That he might redeem them which were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of the sons.*] After *Paul* had taught, that righteousnes and faith cannot come to us by the Law, neither that we can deserve it by nature, he sheweth him by whom we obtaine true righteousnesse and faith, and which is the author of our Iustification. Now this could not come unto us without any price, for it cost a very great price, even the sonne of God: The Apostle therefore saith: *When the fulnesse of time was come*, that is, when the time was ended, that time, I say, wherein it behoved us to live children and servants under the discipline of the Law. Wherefore the matter of sentences hath erred here, who interpreted the fulnesse of time, the time of grace, which began at the birth of Christ, plaine contrary to the Apostle, who wheras he hath written, the fulnesse of time, this man hath interpreted, the time of fulnesse. For *Paul* speaketh of the time, which was appointed of the father to the sonne, wherein he should live under tutors. Now as this time was full come

come to the Jewes and ended, when Christ came in the flesh, so is it daily fulfilled to others, when they come unto the knowledge of Christ, and doe change the servitude of the Law, with the faith of the sonnes. And this indeed is that comming, whereby alone we obtaine the liberty of sonnes, without which that corporall comming would avails nothing. For Christ even for this cause hath come unto us, that beleeving in him, we may be restored to true liberty, by which faith they of the antique time also obtained the liberty of the spirit. And so whereas he should come to the holy men of old time, he came even then, forasmuch as by faith they felt him to be their true Saviour and deliverer, howbeit he is not yet come to our Jewes, although he is gone away againe in body long since: for they doe not beleeve in him. All from the beginning of the world to the end must trust unto the comming of Christ, whereby alone servitude is changed with liberty, but yet by faith, either in Christ being to come, as it was before he was borne: or in him being come, as it is now. Wherefore as soone as thou beginnest to beleeve in Christ, he cometh unto thee a deliverer and Saviour, and now the time of bondage is ended, that is as the Apostle speaketh, the fulnes thereof is come. This place surely is very copious, and containeth in it divers things most worthe to be known, so that I greatly feare, that it shall not be handled of us according to the worthines thereof. For it teacheth that it is not sufficient to beleeve that Christ is come, but that we must also beleeve that he was sent of God, is the sonne of God, and also very man, borne of a virgine, who alone hath fulfilled the Law, and that not for himself, but for us, that is, for our salvation's sake. Let us weigh and consider these things in order. First it is sufficiently taught in the Gospel of *John*, that Christ is the sonne of God, and was sent of God, which he that beleeveeth not is in a most miserable case, as Christ himself pronounceth *John 8. Except ye beleeve that I am he, ye shall dye in your sinnes.* And *John 1, In it was life, and that life was the light of men.* For this cause the mind of man neither may nor ought to enjoy any other thing then that sovereign good, so, that it should be satisfied with any other then with it, whereof it was made, and which is the fountaine of all good things: wherefore it is not the will of God that we should beleeve or repose our trust in any other thing, neither doth this honour belong to any other, and therefore God himself joyned himself to man, being made man, that he might more forcibly allure men into him, and stirre them up to beleeve in him. No good could come unto God hereby, but it was necessary for us that he should be made man, lest that we should beleeve in any other thing then in God alone. For if we should beleeve in Christ, and not in God, as God should be deprived of his honour, so should we be deprived of life and

salvation. For we must beleve in one God, who is the very truth, and we without him can neither live, nor obtaine salvation. Whereas therefore the Apostle saith, *God sent forth his sonne*, it is thereby manifest, that he was, before he came and was made man. Now if he be a sonne, he is more then a man or an Angell, which seeing they are the highest creatures, surely he is also true God. For to be the sonne of God, is more then to be an Angell, as it is else where declared. Against seeing that he is sent of God, and is his son, he must needs be another person. And so the Apostle teacheth here, that the Father and the Son are one God, and two persons. Of the holy Ghost it shall be spoken hereafter.

The second thing which ought here to be considered, is, that Christ is very man and the sonne of man. This Paul teacheth, when he saith: *made of a Woman*. For surely that that is made or born of a woman, is man: A Woman by nature bringeth forth nothing but very man. This it is necessary that we believe as the Lord himself declareth *Jo. 6.* in these words. *Except ye eat the flesh of the sonne of man, and drinke his blood, ye have no life in you.* But to eat and drinke his flesh and blood, is nothing else but to believe that Christ took these upon him indeed, and did also yeld them to death for our sake. This is that Covenant which was promised to *Abraham*: *In thy seed shall all the Nations of the earth be blessed. Gen. 22.* Christ is this seede, and therefore the true sonne of *Abraham*, his flesh and blood. Hereupon it appeareth that they prevaile nothing, which make a proper way unto themselves to God, by their own workes and godlines, and neglecting Christ, strive to come directly unto God, as the Turkes and Iewes doe. This Christ alone is the Mediator and blessed seede, by whom thou must receive blessing, otherwise thou shalt continue for ever in malediction. This Covenant of God shall not be violated because of any. Thus Christ himself saith, *Job. 6. No man cometh to the Father, but by me.* The nature of God is otherwise higher, then that we are able to attaine unto it; wherefore he hath humbled himselfe unto us, and taken upon him that nature, which is best known and most familiar unto us, to wit, even our owne. Here he looketh for us; here he will receive us; he that will seek him here, shall finde; he that will ask here shall be heard: here is the throne of grace, and the true mercy seate, from which none is driven or thrust, which with true faith resorteth unto it. They which doe here neglect him, as though he were made man for naught, and in the meane season doe without a Mediator pray unto God, who hath created heaven and earth, they shall pray indeed but none shall help them: they shall crie, but none shall heare them. The third thing which is here set forth unto us to believe, is, that Mary the Mother of Jesus is a Virgine. This Paul affirmeth, when he saith, that he was made of a Woman, and not of a Man, as other are wont

wont. This is that one man, which was borne only of a Woman. He would not say of a Virgine, for that a Virgine is not a name of nature, but a Woman signifieth a sex and certaine condition, wherunto it belongeth to be with child, and bring forth, that is to doe the parts of a mother. Seeing therefore that Mary was a Mother indeed, she is rightly called a woman. For she brought forth fruit unto us, which belongeth to a mother, and not to a Virgine, although she brought it forth alone, without the meanes of man, wherein she was declared both a singular virgin and woman. But because it is of greater importance to the Apostle, and unto all us, that *Mary* is a Woman, and thereby the Mother of Christ, then that she is a virgine, for that is only an ornament unto her, but in that she was a woman, she brought forth him which was salvation unto all, for this cause I say, the Apostle calleth her rather a Woman then a Virgine. Neither was it considered in choosing her, that she was a Virgine, but that she was a woman: For that she being a Virgine, became a mother, the cause was, for that it behoved that Christ should be borne without sinne, and therefore without the commixion of man. For of the seed of a fittall man, nothing could be borne, but that which is defiled with sinne: but it behoved that Christ should be that blessed seed, whose blessing should be powred forth upon all, as the manner of the divine Covenant required. Whereupon it is gathered, that Christ could not be borne of the seed of man, for that all men are by nature under the curse. For how should blessing be promised to come unto all by Christ, if all were not subject to the curse? Forasmuch then as the Covenant of God promised to *Abraham*, did require these two things, both that Christ should be the true son of *Abraham*, that is, his seed, his true flesh and blood, and that also he should be borne pure from sin: this meane was invented, that he should of *Mary* being very Woman and the daughter of *Abraham*, be borne very man, and the right offspring of *Abraham*: & that also he should be borne without the commixion of man, a virgin being conceived with child by the only means of the holy Ghost that being full of blessing, he might derive the same unto all believers. So was the Covenant of God fulfilled on either side: and it came to passe, that Christ became both the true seed of *Abraham*, and yet free from all contagion of *Adam*, and is also the author of eternall blessing to them that believe. Wherefore although *Mary* be holily to be revered by the name of Virgine, yet by no comparison greater reverence is due unto her then by the name of woman, for that her most holy Members, inasmuch as she was a Woman, were advanced unto this dignity, that they were as means toward the fulfilling of the holy Covenant of God, and by them he was brought forth, which was to put away all curse from them that believe in him, that so he might be

both the blessed seed of Abraham, and the blessed fruit of the womb of Mary. Unto which benefit the only virginity had not been sufficient, yea it had been even unprofitable. The fourth thing whereof the present place of the Apostle doth admonish us, is, that Christ hath satisfied the Law for us. Which he also witnesseth of himselfe Matth. 5. *I am not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it.* This also the reason of the covenant requireth: for if by this seed of Abraham all men must be delivered from the curse, it is necessary that by it the Law be fulfilled. For as men are by nature the children of wrath, and subject to the curse, so it must needs be accursed, whatsoever they doe, for it is before proved at large, that he which is evill himself, can work nothing that is good: likewise that we can do nothing that God will approve, unless we ourselves be approved of him before: and seeing that the Law requireth the heart, which cannot be performed of them, which are not as yet regenerate by the spirit, it must needs be, that all the sonnes of Adam are guilty of transgressing the Law, and unless, whereas they themselves are not able, another, to wit Christ, should performe that which the Law requireth, and to satisfy the Law for them, they should altogether perish by the curse of the Law. But when as Christ, going about to shew, that the heart is required of the Law, did condemne the works which proceed not from a heart that is godly and consenting unto the Law, he was accused of the Pharisees. that he was come to destroy the Law. Because therefore he would take away this false opinion of himselfe, he said: *I think not that I am come to destroy the Law, for I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill the Law*: yea, and I will give a spirit unto them that be mine, which shall justify their heart by faith, and incline it unto true good workes. The same is usuall with Paul also, who, Rom. 3. when he had rejected the workes of the Law, and extolled faith, answering such an objection, saith: *Do we then make the Law of none effect? God forbid: yea we establish the Law.* For we teach, that the true fulfilling of the Law is by Christ. The like also is wont to be objected to us, as though we did forbid good workes, when we disallow Monasteries with their workes, and teach that they must first by faith become good and approved of God, whereby they may afterwarde doe true good workes, by which both their flesh may be chastised, and their neighbours edified. Here we must note moreover, that the Law can be fulfilled of no man, but of him which being free from the Law, is no more under it. We must accustom our selves also to the manner of Pauls speech, that we may know assuredly who is under the Law, and who is not under the Law. As many therefore as worke good workes, because the Law hath so commanded, being brought thereunto either with feare of punishment, or hope of reward, are under the Law, and are compelled to doe good things and to be honest,



honest, being not brought hereunto of their own voluntarie will. Wherefore the Law hath dominion over them, whose servants and captives they are. Now such are all men; that are not yet regenerate by Christ, which every one may easily learne with himself by experience, every mans own conscience shewing it unto him. We all find our selves so affected, that if no Law did urge us, and both the feare of punishment, and hope of reward were away, and it were plainly free for us to doe what we list, we would doe altogether those things that are evill, and omit the things that are good, especially either temptation moving us, or occasion provoking us. But now, forasmuch as the Law stayeth us with the threatnings and promises thereof, we doe oftentimes abstaine from evill things, and doe those things that be good, howbeit we doe them not for the love of goodnesse, and hatred of evill, but only for feare of punishment, and respect of reward: wherefore being left wholly to our selves, we are servants of the Law, neither doe we heare it any otherwise, then servants doe their hard and cruell Master.

But they that are not under the Law, that is, are not so against their wills in subjection under the dominion thereof, they of their own accord doe good workes, and abstaine from evill, being neither terrified with the threatnings of the Law, nor allured with the promises thereof, but even for that they doe of their voluntary will beare a love to honesty, and hate that which is dishonest, and are also from their heart delighted with the Law of God, so that if there were no Law made, notwithstanding they would desire to live and otherwise then the Law commandeth: as, to shun those things that be evill, and apply themselves to honest studies and exercises. They that are such, are sonnes, whom not nature, but that only blessed seed of Abraham, that is, Christ, could make such, renewing by his grace and spirit the hearts of them that beleeve in him. Wherefore not to be under the Law, is not, to be free from the Law, that they may doe those things that are contrary thereunto, and omit those things that are good; but it is to do good things and abstaine from wicked things, not through compulsion or necessity of the Law, but by free love and with pleasure, even as if no Law commanded them, and their own nature brought them hereunto, as indeed it doth; howbeit the new nature of the spirit, not that old nature of the flesh. For as there is need of no Law for the body, which may compell it to eate, to drinke, to digest, to sleep, to goe, to stand, to sit, and to doe the other workes of nature, for that it is ready to doe them of it own nature, when the case so requireth, and when it is meet, without all respect either of reward, or punishment: and may not unfailie be said, is concerning these things, not to be under a law, notwithstanding thereupon nothing lesse followeth, when that it doth therefore abstaine from such workes, unto which indeed it



So much the more applyeth it self as they are lesse commanded, and are more naturall unto it : After the same sort, altogether doth the godly man behave himself concerning the workes of godlinesse, he is carried to the doing of them by that new nature of the spirit, albeit there were no law, at all, and all both hope of reward, and feare of punishment were away. This only is the true liberty of a Christian man, and the deliverance of him from the Law, whereof *Paul* speaketh 1. Tim. 1. *The Law is not given unto a righteous man.* VVhich is as much as it he had said : A righteous man of his own accord doth good thing, and abstaineth from evil, having no regard either of reward or of punishment. The same thing also he meaneth by that saying Rom. 6. *Ye are not under the Law, but under Grace,* that is, ye are sonnes, not servants : Ye live holily, being compelled or enforced with nothing, but of your free and of it self ready will. To the same effect pertaineth that saying also Rom. 8. *Ye have not received the spirit of bondage to feare again, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption of the sonnes.* The Law maketh a fearefull, that is, a right servile and cainish spirit, but Grace giveth the free spirit of sonnes, like unto *Abels*, by Christ the blessed seed of *Abraham*. VVhereof the 31. Psalm speaketh : *Stablish me with thy free spirit.* VVhereupon in the 118. Psalm Christian people are said to be of a free will. Moreover Christ hath fulfilled the Law, that he only of all mankind hath of his own accord satisfied it, being with nothing compelled or enforced thereunto, neither is any other able to do the same, unless he receive it of him, and by him : And therefore *Paul* saith here : *He was made under the Law, that he might redeem them which were under the Law.* The first thing therefore that *Paul* here commendeth unto us to be beleaved, is, that Christ for our sake was made under the Law, that he might deliver us from the bondage of the Law, and of unwilling servants make us free sons : whereupon he saith : *That he might redeem them, which were under the Law,* that is, might deliver them from the Law. Now he delivereth from the Law by the meanes aforesaid, not by destroying or utterly abolishing the Law, but by fulfilling it, and giving a free spirit, which shall doe all things willingly, without any respect either of the threatnings or the promises of the Law, no otherwise then if there were no law at all given, and is carried thereunto of his own nature. After which sort *Adam* and *Eve* were affected before they had sinned. But by what meanes is this spirit given and liberty gotten ? No otherwise then by faith, for he that truly beleaveth, that Christ came for this cause, that he might deliver us from the Law, and that he hath delivered him already, he, I say, hath indeed received the spirit of liberty, and doth verily obtaine that which he beleaveth : for both faith and this spirit of sonnes come together. VVhereupon *Paul* saith here : that Christ hath delivered

delivered us from the Law, for this, that we might receive the adoption of the sonnes: both which come unto us by faith. Thus therefore we have those five things, whereof *Paul* admonisheth us in this plentifulfull and fruitfull a place. But here riseth a question. Forasmuch as to be under the law, is to be subiect to the Law by compulsion, and to obey the Law no otherwise then unwillingly, so that none of them which are under the Law, are able to satisfie the Law, why *Paul* saith, that Christ was made under the Law. I answer, that the Apostle maketh a very great difference between Christ, who was made under the Law, and other men who are borne under the Law. For whereas he saith, that Christ was made under the Law, he would signifie, that Christ did put himself under the Law of his own accord, and was with his will made subiect unto it of the Father, when as he might not have been under the Law. But we were under the Law, being the servants of the Law by nature, and bearing the dominion thereof unwillingly: as Christ was willingly, not by nature, and against his will. Wherefore there is as great difference between, to be made under the Law, and, to be under the Law by nature, as between these, to be subject to the Law of free will, and, to be subject to the Law by servile constraint. It was free unto Christ, to be under the Law, or not to be under it, and he made himself subiect to it of his owne accord, that he might most diligently doe all things that the Law requireth: but we were under the Law, even against our will.

Thou mayest see a resemblance hereof in *Peter*, and the Angell which came into the Prison to *Peter* to deliver him. Both of them were then in the Prison, but *Peter* was there being cast into it of *Herod*, not of his owne accord, wherein he was also to abide, for hee could not goe forth when he would. But the Angell went into the Prison of his owne accord, whereupon it was free for him also to goe forth when he would: he was there only for *Peter's* sake, and not for his owne, and freely even at his owne will, whom when *Peter* heard and followed, it was free for him also to goe forth of the Prison, where as before it was not. This Prison is the Law: *Peter* is our Conscience: The Angel is Christ. Christ being absent, our conscience is held captive of the Law, and being unwilling of it self, is mooved unto good things, by the threatnings and promises thereof, and is tyed and bound unto honest things with these, as with two Chaines. The Keepers of this Prison are the Teachers of the Law, which declare the force of the Law unto us. So wee being bound in the Prison of the Law, Christ cometh unto us, and willingly maketh himself subject to the Law, and doth the workes of the Law of his owne accord, which wee did bend our selves to doe against our wills, yet and doth them for our sake, that he may joyne us unto him, and also bring us out together

gether with himself. For he may easily goe forth, who is held in the Prison by no necessity. If now we cleave unto him, and follow him, we also do goe forth. But this cleaving to him and following of him is nothing else, then to believe in him, and not to doubt that he became man, and was made subject to the Law, for thy salvations sake. Together with this faith cometh the spirit, he by and by maketh thee ready and willing to doe with pleasure all things that the Law requireth; and so truly delivereth thee from the captivity of the Law, those chains of threarnings and promises fall of from thee, and thou mayest now goe whether thou list, that is, thou mayest live according to thine owne will, or rather according to the will of the holy Ghost ruling all things in thee: finally, what good things soever thou doest, thou doest them from the heart, and with great pleasure. Moreover, that it may be made more plaine, after what sort Christ made himselfe subject to the Law, wee must understand that he was made under the Law after two sorts: both for that he did perfectly performe the workes of the Law, and also for that he suffered and overcame the curse and punishment thereof for our sake. For he was circumcised, presented in the Temple, and the time of the purification being finished, was obedient to his Parents. All which things he might have omitted, being Lord of the Law, and over all: Howbeit he applyed himself to these things freely of his own will, not being either compelled by any feare, or allured by any hope. In outward workes he was in the meane season altogether like unto them which were under the Law, that is, which did the workes of the Law against their wills, in asmuch as his free spirit was hidden from others, even as also the servile and constrained will of others is hidden. And so he both was under the Law, and not under the Law. He behaved himself outwardly in workes, as they which are unwillingly held under the Law, when as notwithstanding he was not under the Law as they, but of his own free will: Wherefore in respect of his workes he was under the Law, but in respect of his will he was free from the Law. But we as well by will as by workes are under the Law by nature, for that wee doe workes according to the rule of the Law, of necessity, yea, and we doe them with that will the Law constraineth and urgeth, inasmuch as we doe not endeavour to doe them of our owne accord. Christ made himselfe subject to the punishment of the Law also for our sakes of his owne will. He did not only performe those workes which the Law commandeth, but he suffered the punishment also which was due to us being transgressors thereof. The Law condemneth to death and the eternall curse, all those that continue not in all things that are written in the booke of the Law to doe them, as Paul Gal. 3. reciteth out of *Moses Levit. 18.* Now it is declared at large before that the Law is full filled of no man, but that all men are against their

their Wills held captives of the Law, wherefore every one is subject to death and to the curse, so that there is no man subject to the Law in respect of workes, and will, which is not also subject to it in respect of the curse. For it curseth and condemneth all that doe not performe it with their whole heart. But here Christ maketh intercession for them that be his, and the judgement which we have deserved, he taketh upon himself, he suffered the punishment due unto us, willingly making himself subject to death and the curse, that is, to eternall damnation, no otherwise then if he had transgressed the whole Law, and had more then all, deserved the sentence thereof against Transgressours, when as he did not only breake the Law, but himself alone fulfilled it; yea and fulfilled it, when as he ought nothing to it, so that he suffered otherwise then he deserved in two respects: both for that he ought nothing to the Law, if he had not observed it, and also for that moreover he most dilligently observed it, so that if the Law had especiall dominion over him, yet had he come in no danger thereof. But on the other side whereas we suffer, we suffer by double right: both for that by the transgression of the Law, we have deserved all the punishment thereof, and also for that, if we had deserved nothing, yet being Creatures, we ought to be obedient to the will of our Creator. Hereof it now plainly appeareth, what this meaneth, that Christ was made under the Law, that he might redeem them which live under the Law: for our sakes, for our sakes, I say, and not for his own he performed that, and that of no necessity, but of his great love toward us: and therby he hath declared both his unspeakable goodnes & mercy towards us, being made accused for us, that he might deliver us from the curse of the Law. He willingly made himself subject to the judgment of the Law, & did himself bear the sentence pronounced against us, that as many of us as doe believe in him, might be free for ever. Whereby marke what an incomparable treasure faith bringeth unto thee, whereby thou enjoyest Christ and all his workes, that thou mayest trust unto them no otherwise then if thou thy self hadest done them. For Christ did them not for himself, whom surely they could profit nothing, he having no neede of any thing, but by them he laid up the treasure of salvation for us, whereunto we shuld trust, and being made blessed might enjoy it: With which faith also the spirit of the sonnes commeth, which beareth witnesse with our spirit, that we are the sonnes and heires of God. What should God now adde unto these? How can a mind hearing these things containe it self, that it should not love God againe with a most ardent affection, and be most sweetly delighted in him? VVhat in any wise may come to be done or suffered, which thou wouldest not willingly take upon thee with exceeding joy, and most high praise of God, with a rejoycing and triumphing mind? which mind if thou wantest

Wantest, it is a certain argument of a faint or surely a dead faith: for the greater thy faith is, so much more ready also and willing is thy mind to those things, which God either sendeth or commandeth. This indeed is the true deliverance from the Law, and the damnation of the Law, that is, from sinne and death, which deliverance commeth to us by Christ. Yet not so, that there is now no law or death, but that they doe not now trouble the beleevers any thing, that is, they are as though they were not. For the Law cannot convince them of sinne, neither can death confound them: but by faith they must happily passe from sinne and death to righteousness and life. Here Munkes, Nunnes, &c. were to be exhorted, if there were as yet left any place with them for counsell and admonition, that they would observe their ordinances, ceremonies, prayers, apparell, and such like, as Christ observed the law, by which meanes surely they should bring unto them no damnation: That is, that they would set the faith of Christ in the first place, and commit the rule of their heart unto him, acknowledging that by that faith only they doe obtaine righteousness and salvation: and that all their ordinances and workes doe availle nothing herunto. Again that they would make themselves subiect to them of their own accord, in no other respect then that by them they might serve their neighbours, and subdue the arrogancy of the flesh. But now seeing they are occupied in them with this double erroneous opinion, as though they were necessary to salvation and righteousness, and if they did not observe them, they should grievously sinne, they are unto them a most certaine destruction, nothing but delusion and sinne, whereby with their great affliction they draw unto hell, where they shall fully suffer the vexations and torments under the Abbat the Devill, which being miserable and foolish men they have here begun. For all their life doth utterly disagree, with the faith of the sonnes, and that which belongeth only to faith, to wit to justify and save us, they attribute to their workes. Wherefore these men cannot both thus stick unto their Ordinances, and therewithall have faith, which suffereth it self to be adicted to no certaine workes, but what things soever the Lord either sendeth or commandeth, or the necessary and need of our neighbour requireth, it suffereth and doth them with great willingnesse and joy. These he that is indued with faith, counteth his workes, having in the meane season no regard of Masses, or Fasting, which some appoint to certaine dayes, of choise of apparell, of meates, of persons, of places and such like, yea he greatly disalloweth of these, inasmuch as they trouble Christian liberty. These things shall suffice to have been spoken concerning the exposition of this place of *Paul*, where about the matter itself required to spend so many words, forasmuch as the nature of faith is so unknowne. For unlesse thou doe well understand the nature of

of faith, thou shalt perceive nothing of very little in the writings of Paul. [Verse 6. *And because ye are sonnes, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his sonne into your hearts, which cryeth, Abba, Father.*]

Here we see very plainly, that the holy Ghost commeth unto the Saints, by no workes, but by faith alone, for Paul saith: *And because ye are sonnes God hath sent forth the Spirit, &c.* Sonnes beleve, when servants onely worke: sonnes are free from the Law, servants are held under the Law, as appeareth plainly by those things that are before spoken. But how commeth it to passe that he saith: *Because ye are sonnes, God hath sent forth the spirit, &c.* seeing it is before said: that by the comming of the spirit we are changed from servants unto the state of sonnes, so that the spirit must be first sent unto us, before we are sons. But here as though we could be sonnes before the comming of the spirit, he saith: *Because ye are sonnes, &c.* To this question we must answer, that Paul speaketh here after the same sort that he spake before. Before the fulnes of time came, we were in bondage under the rudiments of the world. All the elect, which are predestinate of the Lord that they shall become sonnes, are counted in the place of sonnes with God. Therefore he saith rightly: *Because ye are sonnes*, that is, because the state of sonnes is appointed unto you from everlasting, *God hath sent forth the spirit of his Sonne*, to wit, that he might finish it in you, and make you such, as he hath long since of his goodnesse determined that he should make you. Moreover he calleth him the spirit of the Sonne of God, that he might continue in commending unto us this benefit of God, that he hath chosen us to be sonnes. For Christ is the sonne of God, and that most beloved. Now if the father give unto us his spirit, he will make us like to his only begotten sonne, his true sonnes and heires, that we may with certaine confidence crie with Christ, *Abba, Father*, being his brethren, and fellow heires with him. Wherein the Apostle surely hath notably set forth the goodnesse of God, which, maketh us partakers with Christ and causeth us to have all things common with him, so that we live, and are led by the same spirit. Moreover these words of the Apostle doe shew, both that the holy Ghost is another from Christ, and yet doth proceed from him, when as he calleth him his spirit. The spirit indeed dwelleth in the godly, and no man will say that he is their spirit, as here Paul maketh him the holy spirit of Christ, saying: *God hath sent forth the spirit of his Sonne*, that is of Christ. For he is the spirit of God, and commeth from God to us, and not ours, unlesse one will say after this sort, my holy spirit, as we say: my God, my Lord. Wherefore whereas he is here said to be the holy spirit of Christ, it proveth him to be God, as of whom that spirit is sent, and is peculiarly counted his spirit.

Furthermore, Christians may perceive by this place, whether they have

have in themselves the holy Ghost, to wit, this Spirit of the sonne, whether they heare his voyce in themselves. For Paul saith, that hee cryeth in the hearts which he possesseth, *Abba, Father*, according as he saith also *Rom. 8. Wee have received the Spirit of adoption, where by we cry Abba, Father.* Now thou hearest this voyce, when thou findest so much faith in thy self, that thou doest assuredly without any doubting presume, not only that thy sinnes be forgiven thee, but also that thou art the beloved son of God, which being certain of eternall salvation, dareth both cal him Father, and be delighted in him with a joyfull and most confident heart. Thou must be so certaine hereof, that thou canst be no more certaine of thy life, and must sooner suffer death, and hellish Torments, then suffer this trust and confidence to be taken from thee. For to doubt any thing herein were no small reproach and contumelie to the death of Christ, as though that had not obtained all things for us, and ought not far more effectually to provoke and encourage us to have a good trust in God, then all our sinnes and temptations are able to put us out of hope and fray us from it. It may be indeed that thou shalt be so tempted, that thou shalt feare and doubt of thine opinion, and thinke plainly that God is not a favourable Father, but a wrathfull Revenger of sins, as it fell out with *Job* and many other Saints, but in such a conflict this trust and confidence that thou art a sonne ought to prevaile and overcome, or else thou shalt come in a miserable and desperate estate. VVhen one of *Cains* brood heareth these things, he is as it were beside himself, by reason of admiration and astonishment, *Fye*, saith he, away with this arrogancy, and this most pernicious error. God turne this minde from me, that I do not presume to thinke that I am the sonne of God: I am a sinner, most miserable and wretched, and will never esteeme more of my self. But thou which desirest to belong unto Christ, flye this kinde of men, no otherwise then most hurtful enemies of Christian faith, and of thy salvation. VVee also know that we are sinners, and very miserable wretched: but here we must not weigh or consider, what wee either doe, or are, but what Christ is, and what he hath done for our sake. It is not spoken here of our nature, but of the grace of God, which so farre exceedeth our sinners, as heaven is higher then the earth, and the East is distant from the West, as the 103. *Psalme* saith: Now if it seem unto thee a great honour that thou art the sonne of God, as indeed it is very great, consider that it is no lesse marvelous, that the son of God for this cause did come, was borne of a VVoman, and made under the Law, that thou mightest become the sonne of God. These are great benefits of God, and do cause in the elect a great trust and confidence in the goodnesse of God, and a spirit which is afraid of nothing, but is bold and able to doe all things. Contrarywise the religion of those of

*Cains*



*Cains brood*, as it is a thing marvellous strait and carefull, so doth it make hearts exceeding fearefull, which serve to no use, but are unapt to all things, fit neither to suffer or doe any thing, which tremble and are afraid even at the shaking of the leafe of a tree, as it was before spoken of them, *Lewis. 26.* Wherefore thou must lay up these words of the Apostle well in thy mind, thou must feele this crie of the spirit, which crieth so in the hearts of all the faithfull. For how shouldst thou not heare the crie of thine own heart? Neither doth the Apostle say, that he doth whisper, speak, yea or sing, it is greater then all these which the spirit doth in the heart, he crieth out amaine, that is, with all the heart. Whereupon it is said *Rom. 8.* that he maketh request for us with sighs that cannot be expressed, and that he beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: how therefore can it be, that our heart should not heare this crie, sighes, and testimonie of the spirit? Howbeit hereunto tentations and adversitie are very profitable, they move to crie, and doe exceedingly stirre up the spirit. Notwithstanding we foolishmen doe greatly feare and fly the crosse, wherefore it is no mervell if we doe never feele the crie of the spirit, and doe continually remaine like them of *Cains brood*. But if thou dost not feele this crie, take heed that thou be not idle and slothfull, neither secure, pray instantly, for thou art in an evill case. And yet doe not desire, that thou mayest feele nothing but this crie of the spirit, thou must feele also another terrible crie made, whereby thou mayest be provoked and urged to this crie of the spirit, which happeneth to all the Saints: That is the crie of finnes, which call most strongly and instantly unto desperation, but this crie must be overcome of the spirit of Christ, by godly calling upon the Father, and crying for his grace, that the trust and confidence of grace may become greater then desperation. Wherefore this crie of the spirit is nothing else, but to be withall our heart touched with a very strong, firme, and unmoveable trust of most deare sonnes toward God, as our most tender and favourable Father. Hereby we may see how farre a Christian life exceedeth nature, which can doe nothing lesse then trust in God, and call upon him as a Father, but is alwaies afraid, and uttereth a voice which is a witness of exceeding feare: Wo is me, how cruell and unrollerable a Iudge art thou, O God? How heavie is thy judgement unto me? As *Cain* said *Gen. 4.* *My iniquity is more then that it may be forgiven. Thou hast cast me out this day from the upper face of the earth, & from thy face shall I be hid, yea it shall come to passe, that every one that findeth me shall say me, &c.* This is a terrible and dreadfull crie, which is necessarily heard of all such as be of *Cains brood*, forasmuch as they trust to themselves and their own workes, and put not their trust in the sonne of God, neither weigh and consider that he was sent of the



the Father, made of a woman; made under the Law, much lesse than all these things were done for their salvation. They are continually tormented in their own workes, the miserable men doe in vaine goe about by them to help themselves, and to obtaine the grace of God. And while their ungodlines is not herewith content, it beginneth to persecute even the sonnes of God: as it is alwayes wont to doe, yea at the last they grow unto such cruelrie, that after the example of their father *Cain* they cannot rest, untill they slay their righteous brother *Abell*, in whom they doe also kill unto themselves Christ. Then the blood of righteous *Abell* crieth unto heaven against unrighteous *Cain*, neither ceaseth it to cry untill the Lord hath revenged it. He asketh those *Cains* of their brother *Abell*, yea of Christ: but they deny all knowledge of Christ, which labour not to become the sonnes of God, and heires by Christ, but to become righteous by their own workes. In the meane season the blood of Christ continually crieth out against them, even nothing but punishment and vengeance, when as for the elect, it crieth by the spirit of Christ for nothing but grace and reconciliation. The Apostle useth here a Syrian, and a Greek word, saying: *Abba, Pater*. For this word *Abba* in the Syrian tongue signifieth a Father, by which name at this day the chiefe of Monasteries are wont to be called, and by the same name Heremites in time past being holy men did call their Presidents, at the last by use it was also made a Latin word. Wherefore that which *Paul* saith is as much as: Father, Father, or if thou hadst rather, as, My Father. But what is the cause why the Apostle doth double the word, Father, that is, the crye of the spirit? I will by your leave bring forth my judgement and opinion hereof: First I thinke that he would hereby shew the force and straining of this holy cry. For when as we call any with great affection and through no small necessity, we are wont easilones to double his name. Now because that sinne, and *Cain*, doe alwayes goe about with desperation to stop this crye of the spirit for the grace of the father, it is need fully to crie most strongly, and with a voice both doubled, and exceedingly strained forth, that is, the trust of the grace of the Father ought to be most strong, and not able to be overcome. Againē such is the manner of the Scripture, to witnesse the certaintie of a thing, sometime to double or iterate the words, as *Joseph* did to *Pharaoh* Gen. 41. So here also the spirit twice calleth upon the Father, whereby it may shew the certaintie of his fatherly favour and grace. For the trust hereof ought to be no lesse certaine, then great and unmoveable. Finally it is meet also to persevere, which againe this doubling of the name of Father doth note unto us. For as soon as we begin to call God Father, Satan with all his band moveth war against us, and omitteth no meanes to wrest from us this trust of sonnes toward God our Father, wherefore the word Father must be diligently doubled, that

that is, our trust and confidence must be confirmed, neither must we ever cease from calling upon this Father, but must most earnestly continue in this cry of the spirit, whereby we may obtaine a certaine sure experience of his fatherly goodnesse, by which our trust in him may be made most certaine and safe. And perhaps Paul had respect hereunto, when he first set down *Abba*, which is a word strange to them, to whom he wrote, after adding *Pater*, that is, Father, a familiar word and of their own language, meaning to signifie hereby, that the beginning of so great trust in God is unaccustomed and even strange unto men, but that when the mind hath a while exercised it, and continued in it although assailed with temptations, it becometh even familiar and almost naturall, that we now enjoy God as a domesticall Father, and doe in every thing most confidently call upon him.

[Verse 7. *Wherefore now thou art not a servant, but a sonne, if thou be a sonne, thou art also an heire of God through Christ.*] Now, saith he, that is after the coming of the spirit of the sonnet, after the knowledge of Christ, *thou art not a servant*. For as it is said, a sonne and a servant are so contrary one to another, that the same man cannot be both a sonne and a servant. A sonne is free and willing, a servant is compelled and unwilling: a sonne lieth, and resteth in faith: a servant in works. And so by this place also it appeareth, that we can obtaine no salvation of God by works, but before thou workest that which is acceptable unto him, it is necessary that thou have received of him and possesse salvation and all things, that thereupon works may freely flow forth, to the honour of so gracious a father, and to the profit of thy neighbours, without any feare of punishment, or looking for reward. This, that which Paul saith, proveth: *If thou be a sonne, thou art also an heire*. For it is said before, that we become the sonne of God by faith, without any works, and therefore heires also, as this place witnesseth: for by nature they that are sonnes, the same also are heires. But if this inherance of the Father be now thine by faith, surely thou art rich in all good things, before thou hast wrought any thing. For how should it be, that by faith thou art the heire of God, without any workes through only grace, and that thou mayest againe first merit it by workes? Wherefore the case standeth, as I often times say; To a man that is baptized and beleeveth in Christ, the heavenly inherance of the Father is already given at once, that is, all good things, they are only hid as yet by faith, for that the manner of the present life cannot suffer, that he should enjoy them being revealed. Whereupon Paul saith *Rom. 8*. Yea are saved, but by hope, for ye doe not as yet see it, but doe yet wait, when the possession of your good things shall be revealed. And *1 Per. 1*. it is said: Your salvation is reserved in heaven and prepared for you, to be shewed in the last time. Wherefore

the workes of a Christian ought not to have regard of meritt, which is the manner of servants, but only of the use and commoditie of his neighbours, that he doe not live and worke to himselfe, but to his neighbour, whereby he may truly live to the glory of God. For by faith he is rich in all good things, and truly blessed. Now the Apostle addeth, *through Christ*, lest that any thinke that so great inheritance commeth unto us freely, and without all cost. For although it be given unto us without our cost, and without all our meritt, yet it cost Christ a deare price, who, that he might purchase it for us, was made under the law, and satisfied it for us both by life and also by death. So those benefits which of love we bestow upon our neighbour, doe come unto him freely, and without any charges or labour unto him, notwithstanding they cost us something, inasmuch as we bestow upon him, although freely and of mere goodnesse, yet those things that are our own, whether it be labour or part of our substance, even as Christ hath bestowed those things that be his upon us. And thus hath *Paul* called back his Galathians from the teachers of workes, which preached nothing but the law, perverting the Gospel of Christ. All which things are very necessary to be marked of us also. For the Pope with his Prelates and Monks, hath now too long a time with intruding and urging his lawes, which are foolish and most pernicious, inasmuch as they do every where disagree with the word of God, seduced almost the whole world from the Gospel of Christ, and plainly extinguished the faith of sonnes, according as the Scripture hath in divers places very manifestly prophesied of his Kingdom. Wherefore let every one that desireth to obtaine salvation, most diligently take heed of him and all his Apostles, no otherwise then of Satan himselfe, and his chiefe and most pernicious Apostles. **The 21. Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, of faith and diffidence in danger and trouble.** [*Matth. 8. Verse 23. to the 27.*] *When Iesus was entred into the ship, &c.*

**A**Ccording to the historie this text setteth before us, an example of faith and diffidence: whereof we may learne both what a strong and invincible thing faith is, and that it must be exercised and tried even in great matters, and full of perill: and also how desperate a thing on the other side diffidence is, and how full of feare and trembling, which can never doe any thing rightly or well. This doth experience most lively set forth in the Disciples. They, when they entred into the ship with Christ, and whilst there was calmes in the lake, were nothing disquieted in mind, neither felt any feare. Then if one should have asked them whether they beleaved, they would have answered without doubt that they did beleave. For they did not know that their heart did trust in that quietnes, for that all troubles were absent, and therefore did rest upon a thing visible, and not upon the invisible grace of

of God, Which then was made manifest, as soone as the tempest was risen, and the waves did cover the ship: for by and by all their trust and confidence ceased, for that the quietnes and calmes whereunto they trusted was taken away, and diffidence, which before when all things were prosperous, did lurke in their minds, did then appeare. For this is the nature of diffidence, that it beleeveth or knoweth no more then it feeleth. For as much therefore as it had possessed the breasts of the Apostles, they felt nothing now but the fearefull tempest, and the waves covering the ship, they saw the sea swelling and greatly raging to threaten nothing but death. These things only did they thinke upon, these only did they consider, and therefore could there be no measure or end of feare and trembling in their minds: the more they weighed in their mind the perill, so much more were they terrified, and seemed now to stick in the very jawes of death, hoping for no life or deliverance. And as they could not so much as thinke any thing else because of their unbelieve, so all comfort also was far from them. For diffidence or unbelieve hath nothing whereunto it may trust or flee, wherefore when outward adversitie commeth, it admitteth nothing into the mind but it, and therefore it can never feele any peace or quietnesse, while this remaineth. So in hell, wherediffidence exerciseth full tyranny, there can never be any intermission of desparation, trembling and terror. But if the Disciples had been then indued with a sound faith, and if it had ruled in this danger, it would have removed from the mind the wind and all this tempest, and instead of these would wholly have thought upon the power of God and his grace promised, whereunto it would no otherwise have trusted, then if it had sate upon a most strong rock, farre from the sea and from all tempest. For this is the chiefe vertue and cunning of faith, that it seeth those things which are not seen or felt, and seeth not those things which are felt, yea which are now sore upon us, and doe presse and urge us. As on the contrary side diffidence seeth nothing but that which it feeleth. For this cause those things are of God laid upon faith, which the whole world is not able to beare, as finnes, death, the world, and the divell: neither suffereth he to be occupied with small matters. For who lieth not death? who is not terrified and overcome of it? Against this invincible faith standeth, yea it couragiously setteth upon it, which otherwise tameth all things, and oversommeth and swalloweth up that unsatiable devourer of life. So even the whole world is not able to bring under and subdue the flesh, but it rather bringeth under and maketh the world subject unto it, and beareth rule over it, so that he liveth carnally whosoever is of the world. But faith subdueth this subduer of all other, holdeth it in subjection, and teacheth it not only to be ruled, but also to obey. Likewise who is able to bear the hatred and furie, ignominie, and persecution

tion of the world? who doth not yield unto it and is oppressed with it? But faith even laugheth at all the iniquitie, rage, and furie thereof, and maketh that unto it selfe matter of spiriual joy where with others are even killed. It doth no otherwise behave it selfe against Satan also, who is able to overcome him, which practiseth so many crafts, and coylez, whereby he stayeth and hindreth the truth, the word of God, faith, and hope, and soweth against them innumerable errors, sects, delusions, heresies, desperations, superstitions, and such kind of abominations, without number? All the world is to him as a sparke of fire to a fountaine of water, it is wholly subdued unto him, in these evils, as (alas) we both see and trie. But it is faith which troubleth him, for it is not only not made subject to his delusions, but it also discovereth and confoundeth them, that they be no more of any importance, that they are able to do nothing, but doe vanish away, as we have experience at this day, by the decaying and vanishing of the papacy and indulgences: Finally, sin hath that force, that that which is even the least, cannot be appeased, or extinguished of any creature, that it doth not gnaw and tare the conscience, yea if all men should go about together to comfort the conscience, wherein sinne hath begun to live, they should go about it in vaine. But faith is that noble Champion, which overcommeth and extinguisheth every sinne, yea it all the sinnes which the whole world hath committed from the beginning, were laid upon on heap, it would extinguish and abolish them altogether. Is not faith therefore most mighty, and of incomparable strength, which dares incounter with so many and mighty enemies, and beareth away the certaine victory? Wherefore *Joh* faith in his first Epist. chap. 5. 4. this is that victory that hath overcome this world, even our faith. Howbeit this victory cometh not with rest and quietnes, we must trie the fight, not without blood and wounds, that is, we must needs feele sinne, death, the flesh, the Divell, and the world, yea and that assailing us so grievously, and with so great force, that the heart of man doe thinke that he is past all hope, that sinne hath overcome, and the divell gotten the upperhand, and on the contrary side, very little feele the force of faith. We see an example, of this fight here in the Disciples, for the waves did not only strike the ship, but did even cover it, that nothing could be now looked for, but that it should be drowned, especially Christ being asleep, and knowing not of this perill: all hope was then past, life seemed to be overcome, and death appeared to have the victory. But as it fell out, with the Disciples in this temptation, so also doth it fall out, and must fall out with all the godly, in all kind of temptations, which are of sinne, the Divell, and the world. In the temptation of sinne, we must needs feele the conscience, thrall unto sinnes, the wrath of God, and hellish paines to hang

hang over us, and all things to be in that case, as though we were past all recovery. Likewise when we have conflicted with the Devill, it must appeare, as though truth should give place to error, and Satan should drive the word of God out of the whole world, and he himself raigne for a God with his delusions and deceits. Neither standeth the case any otherwise when it commeth to passe, that we are tryed of the world, it must needs be that it should greatly rage, and cruelly persecute us, so that it shall seem that no man at all is able to stand, that no man is able to obtaine safety, or professe his faith: that *Caine* only shall beare rule, and suffer his brother in no place. But we must not judge according to such feeling and outward appearance of things, but according to faith, the present example ought to stirre us up hereunto, and to be received of us, instead of speciall comfort. For we learne hereof, that albeit sinnes doe urge us, death disquiet us, the world rage against us, and the Divell lay snares for us, that is, although the waves do cover the ship, yet we must not be discouraged. For although thy conscience being wounded doth feeble sinne, and the wrath and indignation of God, yet shalt thou not therefore be plunged into Hell. Neither shalt thou therefore die, although even the whole world doe hate and persecute thee, and gape so wide to devour thee, as the morning spreadeth forth it self: they are only waves, which falling upon the ship doe terrifie thee, and compell thee to crie out, we perish, Lord save us. Thou hast therefore in the former part of this text, the nature of faith set forth, how it is wont and ought to be: have himself in temptation, also how desperate a thing diffidence is, and nothing to be counted of. The other part commendeth unto us love in Christ, whereby he was brought so farre, that he brake of his sleep, arose, and counted the danger that his Disciples were in for his own, and helped them freely, asking or looking for nothing of them therefore. Even as it is the nature of Christian love to doe all things freely and of good will to the glory of God, and profit of our neighbours, seeking to it self nothing thereby. For the exercising of which love man adopted of God, is left in the earth, even as Christ being made man lived in the earth what he might doe for us, as he witnesseth of himself: *I came not to be served, but to serve, and to give my life for the ransom of many.* Mar. 10. 28. [*The Allegories of this deed.*] In this deed Christ hath set forth the life of Christians, and the state of such as preach and teach the word of God. The ship signifieth the Church, the sea the world, the wind the devill, the Disciples of Christ are the Preachers and godly Christians: Christ the truth, the Gospel and faith. Now, before that Christ and his Disciples enter into the ship, the sea is calme, and the wind quiet, but when Christ with his Disciples are entred in by and by ariseth a tempest.

This is that which he said: *I came not to send peace but the sword.* Math. 10. 34. For if Christ would suffer the world to live after his own manner, and would not reprove the works thereof, it would be quiet enough. But now seeing that he preacheth that they which are counted wise men, are fooles; they that are counted righteous, are sinners; they that are counted rich, are not blessed, but miserable, it rageth and is in great furie. So thou mayest at this day find wise men of this world, which indeed would suffer the Gospell to be preached, if the words of the Scripture should be simply declared, and in the mean season the state of Ecclesiasticall persons not reprov'd; but as soon as thou shalt begin to condemne by the Scriptures all those things which have been hitherto brought in under a false name of Religion, and to teach that they are to be reiect'd as being of no importance, thou preacheest seditiously, and troublest the world with unchristian doctrine.

But how doth the present text pertain unto us? A great tempest did arise where that Ship went, wherein Christ and his Disciples were. Other ships did passe the Sea quietly, nothing tossed of the windes, this ship only must be tossed and covered with waves, because Christ was caried in it. For the world can suffer any kinde of preaching beside the preaching of Christ: the cause is, for that he condemneth all things of the world, and chalengeeth all righteousnes to himself, according to that which he saith Math. 12. 30. *He that is not with me, is against me:* And againe: *The spirit will reprove the world of sinne, of righteousness and of iudgement.* He saith not: will preach, but, *will reprove*, and not this or that man, but, *the world*, and whatsoever is in the world. Against this ship of Christ all this tempest is raised, and it is brought into danger. For the world doth not suffer his owne things to be condemned, but Christ cannot allow them, and if he should allow them, he had come in vaine. For if the world were wise by it self, and did know and follow the truth, what need had there been that Christ and his Disciples should preach? Wherefore it is not a small comfort to Christians, especially to Preachers, that they are certaine before, that as soon as they shall begin to preach Christ to the world, they must suffer persecution, and that it cannot be otherwise. So that it is a sure signe, and therefore to be wished, that it is true Christian preaching if it be tried with persecution, especially of the holy, learned and wise men of the world. As it is an undoubted sign also, that it is unchristian preaching, if it be praised commonly and honoured of the world, according to that saying Luke 6. *Blessed are ye when men hate you, and put out your name as evil, for the name of mans sake: for so did their Fathers to the Prophets.* Now marke how our spirituall men do behave themselves, and of what sort their doctrine is: They have got into their subjection the riches, glory, and power, of the world, and they

that prayse them, enjoy the honour and pleasures thereof, their case in all things agreeth with the case of the false Prophets, and yet they dare boast themselves to be Preachers and Teachers of Christ, and worshipers of God. The next thing, whereby this deed doth comfort and encourage the Preachers of Christ, is, that it sheweth where help is to be asked, when a tempest is risen: to wit, not of the world, for not mans wisdom or power, but Christ himself, and he alone is able to help them. Him they must call upon in every distress with full confidence, in him they must trust, as his Disciples here did. For unless they had believed that Christ was able to take away the danger wherein they were, they would not have awaked him, and prayed him to save them: although their faith then was very weake, and very much diffidence was in them, for that they did not confidently commit themselves with him unto danger, doubting nothing but he was able to deliver them out of the midst of the Sea, and from death it self. Hereof therefore let it be acknowledged as certain, that as no Judge or Moderator can be given to the word of God, but God only, so there can be had no other maintainer or defender thereof: who as he sendeth it out whether he will without any merit or counsell of men, so he alone also will defend and preserve it without the aid or strength of men: and therefore he that seeketh aid unto this word of men, shall without doubt fall, being forsaken as well of men as of God. Whereas Christ did sleep, it giveth us to understand, that in the time of persecution he doth sometimes withdraw himself, and seemeth as though he slept, whiles that he giveth not strength valiantly to resist, the peace & tranquillity of mind being now disturbed, but suffereth us to wrastle and labour with our infirmity for a while, that we may acknowledge how we are altogether nothing, and that all things doe depend upon his grace and power. As Paul confesseth of himself. 2. Cor. 1. that it behoved that he should be so pressed and troubled out of measure, that wee should not trust in our selves, but in God, which raiseth the dead. Such sleep of God David often times felt, and maketh mention thereof in many places. *Arise, awake, O Lord: why sleepest thou? why sleepest thou forget us? &c.* In a lumme, the present text offereth unto us two principall things, full of confidence and godly boldnes. The first, that when persecution is risen for the word of God, wee may say: Wee knew that it would so come to passe. Christ is the ship, therefore the Sea sorageth, the winds trouble us, the waves fall upon us as though they would drowne us. But let them rage and be furious as much as they may: it is certaine, the Sea and the windes doe obey Christ, which is the other principall thing which this text offereth. Persecution shall extend no farther, nor rage any longer then he will, and albeit the Waves doe even overwhelm us, yet must they be obedient at his be



beck. He is Lord over all, wherefore nothing shall hurt us; he only endue us with his grace, that we be not overcome by unbelief and so despaire, Amen. Whereas the men merveiled and praised the Lord, as unto whom the Sea and Windes doe obey, it signifieth that the Gospel and word of God is so far from being extinguished by persecution, that thereby is spread farther abroad, and faith also is increased and becometh stronger. Wherein it appeareth how divers the nature of this divine good thing is from the good things of the world, which decay by calamity and misfortune, and are increased by Prosperity and fortunate affaires: But the Kingdom of Christ is increased and strengthened by tribulation and adversitie: but is diminished and weakened by peace and tranquillitie. Whereupon Paul saith 2. Cor. 12. *The Lords power is made perfect through weaknes*: which God performe in us also, Amen. **The 22 Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, wherein is intreated of the life of a Christian.** [ 2. Cor. 6. ver. 1 to the 10 ] *So we therefore as workers together &c.*

**T**His is an admonition and exhortation to the Corinthians, to apply themselves to those things, which they did already know. The words surely are easie to be understood, but hard to be done, and in use most rare. For in such merveilous order and colours he painteth out Christian life, as it cannot be pleasant to the flesh to behold. First he saith: *As workers together we beseech you.* He calleth the Ministers of the word together workers, as 1. Cor. 3. he also saith: *Wee together are Gods labourers, ye are Gods Husbandry, & Gods building.* Which is thus much in effect: Wee preach and labour in the word among you by teaching and exhorting, but God inwardly with his spirit doth blesse and give the encrease, least that the outward labour in the word be in vaine. And so God is the inward and true Master, which bringeth to passe all things, whom we serve in the Office of outward preaching. Now he calleth himself and his Fellowes such together workers, lest they should contemne the outward word, as if though they either had not need of it, or had already sufficiently attained to the knowledge thereof. For although God can alone by his spirit, without the outward word work all things in the minds of the elect, yet he will not doe it, but rather will use together working preachers, and worke by their word when and where it pleaseth him. Forasmuch therefore as it seemeth good unto God to give to Preachers this office, name, and dignitie, that they be counted workers together with him, it is not lawfull for anyman to challenge either that learning or holines unto himself, that he neglect even never so simple a Sermon wherein the word of God is preached, much lesse that he contemne it: for wee know not when that time will come, when God by his Preacher will vouchsafe to accomplish his worke: in us. Secondly, the A-

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possible admonisheth of the danger of losing the light of the Gospel, when he saith: *that ye receive not the grace of God in vaine.* Whereby he giveth us to understand, that the preaching of the Gospel is not a perpetuall, continuing and permanent doctrine, but rather that it is like raine that suddainly cometh and soon passeth away, when as the Sun and heate come by and by, and take away all the moisture that is left thereof, and afterward scorch and hurt things neverthelesse. This very experience proveth, for no man shall be able to bring forth even one place in the world, where the Gospel hath remained pure and sincere above the age of one man, but continued and increased while those lived, by whose ministry it began, they departing hence that also almost wholly departed, and by and by after followed Hereticks and false Teachers, with their delusions and false doctrine, perverting and corrupting all things. So *Mosis* foretold his *Israelites*, that by and by after his death it should come to passe, that they should depart from the way of the Lord, and corrupt their owne wayes, which the Book of *Judges* witnesseth to have come to passe. Moreover the same Book saith, that as often as any Judge which had called againe the word of the Lord did dye, they fell againe forthwith to their ungodlines, and made all things worse and worse. So *Joas* the King continued in his duty so long as *Iehoiada* the Priest lived, who being dead, he began by and by to be a King unlike himself, and left the Office of a good and Godly King. Neither tell it out otherwise after Christ had received his Apostles to himself, almost the whole world was filled with Heresies and false doctrine. Which *Paul* pronounced before, *Act. 20. 29. I know this*, saith he, *that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.* &c. So standeth the case at this day also, the pure and sincere Gospel hath shined unto us, the day of grace and salvation, and the acceptable time are present but they shall shortly be ended if the world stand. Moreover, to receive grace in vaine can be nothing else, then to heare the pure and sincere word of God, whereby the grace of God is preached and offered, and notwithstanding to embrace it with no dilligence, neither to be changed or altered in life. By this unthankfull sloathfulness we deserve to have it taken away againe as being unworthy of it. For we making so light of the Gospel are undoubtedly they which are bidden and called to the marriage, but whiles being busied about other matters we despise this grace, the good man of the House is angry with us, and sweareth that he will never tast of his Supper. The same doth *Paul* now here admonish of, that wee take heed to ourselves, least that wee receive the Gospel unthankfully and without fruit. Yea Christ also admonished us of the same, *Iohn 12. 35. Walk whilest ye have the light, lest darknesse come upon you.* It ought surely to make us more warie and heedfull, e-

ven for that we suffered so grievous and pernicious darknesse under the Pope. But wee have now forgotten all such things, no thankfulness, no amendment is found among us. Which how greatly to our owne hurt we neglect, we shall shortly feele. For he saith: *I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold now the accepted time.* He describeth here the merveilous felicitie which is there where the Gospell flourisheth, there is no wrath, no revengement, all things are replenished with grace and salvation, yea it is unspeakable how great felicitie these words do speak of. Where as he first saith a time accepted, it is spoken by an Hebrew figure, and is as much as if thou say: a gracious time and replenished with the favour of God, wherein God turneth away his Anger, and declareth nothing but love toward us, and a ready will to help us. Our sinnes are blotted out, not only those that be past, but those also which as yet stick in our flesh, and that I may speake in a word: the kingdome of mercy is present, wherein nothing but forgiveness of sinnes, and restoring of grace is shewed: heaven standeth open, the right yeare of Jubile is come, wherein all debts are remitted, and no grace is denyed. Whereupon he saith: *In a time accepted have I heard thee*, that is, now I favour thee and am mercifull unto thee, whatsoever thou wilt have, pray for it, and thou shalt obtaine it, and certainly receive it. Only let not the faule be in thy self, pray, while this time endureth. *Behold now the day of salvation.* He calleth this the time and day of salvation, that is of help and felicitie. For we are not only certaine hercof, that God is mercifull and favourable unto us, and we acceptable unto him, but also as we believe, and by faith are sure of his goodnes toward us, so he declareth indeed, heareth them that crie unto him, helpeth and saveth them, yea and maketh them plainly blessed. We therefore worthily acknowledge and confesse this time to be the wished, prosperous, happy, and very day of salvation. For it becometh that both be together, both that God favour us, and also that he declare his Favour towards us by worke or deed, That he favoureth us, the accepted time which is now present doth witnes: that he doth also help us and finish our salvation, this other witnesseth, to wit the day of salvation, the day of help. But as the state of the life of Christians is, if thou wilt judge according to the outward man, thou wilt judge it rather a time of affliction, wrath and indignation, wherein the Gospell is preached, and wherein they live, then a time of grace and salvation. Wherefore the words of the spirit must be spiritually understood, so shall we easily see and perceive, that these noble and most pleasant names do most rightly & properly belong to the time wherein the Gospell flourisheth, that it is a time accepted, that is full of grace, and a time of salvation, whereby freely all the riches and felicitie of Christs kingdome are notably

notably commended and set forth unto us. *Let us give no occasion of offence in any thing.* Forasmuch therefore as there is so acceptable and gracious a time, let us, saith he, use it worthily, and not receive it in vain. First endeavouring to give no occasion of offence to any man, least that our office of preaching Christ be reprehended, whereby he sufficiently declareth what offence he meaneth, namely, that the doctrine of the Gospel may not be stumbled at, as though he taught that which is not perfect and sound. Now there may be given a double occasion of offence, whereby the Gospel is reprehended: one, whereby the heathen are offended, when as some under a pretence of the Gospel, seeke the liberty of the flesh, will not be obedient to Magistrates, turning the liberty of the spirit, into fleshly licentiousnes. These doe marvelously offend the discreeter and wiser sort of the Heathen, and make that they hate the Gospel without a cause, which they think doth teach this licentiousnes: and so as it were with a certaine force they doe by this their insolencie repell and drive them from the faith of Christ: for they measuring all Christians by these, doe deest them as light men, and troublers of the common-wealth, and therefore not to be suffered. This offence therefore, and this reprehension, or rather hatred and persecution of the Gospel we acknowledge to come through these preposterous Christians. Another offence is, whereby even Christians among themselves are some time offended through the unseasonable use of all Christian liberty, in meats and other indifferent things, whereat the weaker sort in faith doe sometime stumble. Whereof the Apostle hath given many precepts *1 Cor. 8. Rom. 14.* He exhorteth therefore here unto that, whereof he admonisheth in other words. *1 Cor. 10. So beaue your selves, that ye give none offence, neither to the Jewes, nor to the Grecians, nor to the Church of God: even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many that they might be saved.* The same he teacheth also *Philip. 2.* that every man look not on his owne things, but on the things of other men, for so all offence should be easily taken away, nay none at all should be given. *That our ministry be not reprehended.* Who can bring to passe that our ministry shall not be reprehended, seeing that the Gospell is necessarily subject to persecution, no lesse then Christ himself? Indeed it is not in us to make that the word of God be not reprehended and persecuted of them which are ignorant of God, and doe not believe: for it is a rock of offence, *Esai. 8. Rom. 9.* this offence cometh because of our faith, and cannot be avoided of us, and therefore the blame thereof ought not to be laid upon us. Howbeit there is an other offence which proceedeth hereof, for that our love is not sufficient dutifull, this cometh through us, inasmuch as our workes are the cause thereof because they do not so shine by faith, that they which

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are conversant with us, may thereby be provoked to serve God, as it is meet. This offence is given through our fault, whom it becommeth so to live, that the Jewes, Heathen and Princes of the world might have no occasion to say: Behold how light and naughty these men are, yea and very wicked wretches, the doctrine of life which they follow must needs be evil and pestilent. So our insanie and crimes are occasion of offence to others, and of hatred and detestation of the most holy word of God. For whereas we ought so to know, preach and follow it, that thereby both our neighbours might be brought unto God, and so the leading of a godly life, and also the glory of God set forth, we by our naughty and slothfull life bring to passe that it doth not only bring no profit and commoditie to our neighbours, but is brought into hatred and made detestible through our meanes, bearing our ignominie and reproach. Now it is a most horrible sinne and wickednesse by our naughtinesse to make the word of God which is most holy and bringeth salvation, to make it I say, so odious, and to repell and drive men from it to our own, and their most certaine destruction.

☞ *But in all things let us behaue our selves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, &c.* Here he describeth in order the signes and proper tokens of a Christian life, wherewith it ought to be adorned in outward conversation: Not meaning that one is made a Christian and godly hereby, but as he saith, that by these as by proper fruits and figures of Christianitie, we should shew our selves to bee both, and behaue our selves as the ministers of God, that is as Christians and godly men. And marke well that he saith: *as the ministers of God.* It may seem very strange, that the ministrie of God consisteth in these, in many afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in prison, in tumults, in watchings, in fastings, &c. Among these hee numbrell not Masses, and prayes for the dead, or other trifles of fained worship of God. He rehearseth those things that pertaine to the true and right service of God; whereby the body is chastised, and the flesh tamed. Which is well to be noted, lest that any neglect fastings, watchings and labour, and make no account of them for that they doe not iustifie. They bring not righteousness indeed, yet are they fruits of righteousness being obtain'd, wherein thou mayest be exercised, and whereby thou mayest keep thy flesh in subjection, and inforce it to do his dowie. *In tumults.* He rehearseth tumults or seditions among the rest, not that it becommeth us to teach or move them, who ought to obey Magistrates, and with quietnesse to live obedient unto all in that which is good, as Paul teacheth *Rom. 13.* and Christ *Matth. 22.* Give unto Cesar those things that are Cessars: but that we must beare tumults of others, as also necessities, distresses, stripes, and imprisonments, which we must cause or procure, unto none, but suffer being

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procured and laid upon us by others. Wherefore in the first place hee seereth much patience, which surely moveth no sedition or tumult, but rather suffereth it, and appeaseth it, if it can. But in the meane season it singularly comforteth us at this time, whereas tumults are commonly imputed unto us, for that this is incident to a Christian life, that for the preaching of the Gospel it is accused to raise sedition, which it rather suffereth being raised of other against the word of God. For as in time past *Ahab* accused the most holy Prophet *Elias* of sedition, affirming that it was he that troubled *Israell*, when as he himselfe indeed did trouble it: so is it neither a shamefull nor new thing, for us to be accused of the same, when we preach the same word. Let us thinke when the enemies of God lay this reproach and slander upon us, that not only *Elias*, not only the Apostles, but Christ himselfe was counted of the Jewes a seditious fellow, and crucified, a title being written in three languages and put on the crosse, that he should of all be counted a seditious king of the Jewes, which would have moved that people against Cesar, and adjoyned them unto himselfe, who indeed by word and example of his life taught nothing more then submission and obedience, and lived so that he was ready to profit and minister unto all. As for the rest whereof the Apostles here maketh mention, as patience, affliction, necessity, distresse, stripes, prisons, labour, watchings, fasting, puritie: it is easie to understand how they pertaine to the ministrie of God, who truly disdaineth to have slouthfull, idle, gluttonous, and drowsie Ministers, and such as cannot abide adversity and trouble. But he specially reproveth our delicate ones, which quietly enjoy revenues and rents, and take their delight and pleasure, thinking that it is an unworthy thing that they should labour, for they are shaven, weare long gownes, and cry out in temples, &c. Howbeit these shall not be able to approve themselves before God, who will have all to labour, and eate their own, and not other mens bread, as it is written by *Paul* to the *Thessalonians*. Who therefore teacheth here also, that God is served by labour, and not thar onely, but that wee also are thereby proved and commended to be the ministers of God.

*In knowledge.* *Paul* taketh knowledge here for that which we call prudence or wisdom, whereby we use things with reason, behaving our selves with discretion and comelines. Of which knowledge the saying also of *Paul Rom. 10.* is understood: *They have the zeale of God, but not according to the knowledge, that is, they beare a zeale to the Law not prudently, nor weying and considering all things well, that they might doe no undecent thing. wherefore whereas he here expressely requireth knowledge in the ministrie of God, he thereby admonisheth us, that we frame our life with reason, and order it prudently, in all things keeping a meane, and having an advised regard*

gard of our Neighbours, least that in any thing we offend the weaker sort, with unseasonable use of Christian liberty. and that we doe all things to the edifying of all. So we must labour, fast, watch, and apply our selves, to chastity, and such other things, not above measure, that either the body may be in danger by too much hunger and watching, or the true purity of life by overmuch abstinence from matrimoniall company, but we must use these things with knowledge, that is, with convenient wisdom and discretion, that they may not any whit hurt, but alwayes edifie. Whereupon *Paul. 1. Cor. 7.* expressly admonisheth married folkes, that they abstaine not overmuch from mutuall company, least that they be tempted of Satan. In all these therefore, in fastings, watchings, labours, chastitie, &c, the Apostle would prescrib & appoint no rule, law, or measure, which the counceils of the Pope and Monks do, but the mean or measure to be observed in them he left free to every mans knowledge and discretion, that every one may consider with himself how much or long he must labour, fast, watch or abstain, to this end, that the flesh may be tamed and made obedient to the spirit. In *long suffering, in kindness, in the holy spirit.* What the two former are, the Apostle hath sufficiently declared *Rom. 2. Gal. 5.* But whereas he saith : *In the holy spirit,* it may be understood after two sorts, either that he speaketh of the holy Ghost, God himselfe, or that he meaneth by the holy spirit the true force and manner of a spirituall life, as though he would admonish in this manner : Beware of an hypocriticall spirit, which will be counted for a holy spirit through a merveilous shew and crafty counterfeiting of spirituall things, when it is indeed an unclean, prophane, and evill spirit, and bringeth in nothing but Sects and Heresies. But live ye in the true and holy spirit which is given of God, which giveth and maintaineth unitie, one minde, heart and affection, wherof he speaketh also *Eph. 4. Endeavour to keep the unitie of the spirit in the bond of peace.* They therefore which persevere in the same true faith, minde and sentence, behave themselves as the Ministers of God in the holy spirit being truly spiritual, and living a spirituall life. For a sincere spiritual life, which is led by the assistance of the holy spirit of God, is also led in the unitie of mindes the heartes by faith being affected after the same sort. In *love unfeyned, in the word of truth.* As he set the holy spirit against hereticks and false Prophets, so he seteth unfeined love against sloathful and sluggish Christians, who albeit they have the same meaning and minde in the true spirituall lite, as concerning opinions of doctrine, yet are they remisse, cold and faint in love. so he seteth the word of truth against them which abuse the word of God, and interpret it according to their own affections, that thereby they may get them a name and profit, For as false spirits doe condemne the word of the Scripture

Scripture, and preferre themselves before it: so these do indeed boast of the word, and will be counted masters of the Scripture, but by their interpretations doe pervert the sense and meaning thereof. Against these Peter speaketh: *If any man speak, let him speak as the words of God*, that is, let them take heed that he be certain that those words which he speaketh, be the words of God and not his own vaine imagination. Now Paul calleth that here the word of truth, which is the sincere word of God, not which is unsincere and fained, which forasmuch as it is ours, is falsely called the word of God. For that which we call the true and right word, the Hebrewes call the word of truth.

*In the power of God.* Of this power Peter also speaketh. 1 Pet. 1. *If any man minister, let him doe it as of the ability which God ministereth.* And Paul Colos. 1. *Wherunto I also labour and strive, according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.* Again Rom. 15. *I dare not speak of any thing which hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, &c.* Christians must be certaine that they are the kingdom of God, and do nothing at all, especially in spirituall functions, and those things that pertaine to the salvation of soules, whereof they are not certaine, that it is not they which worke, but God that worketh by them. For in the kingdome of God it is meet, that God alone doe speak, command, do, dispose, and worke all things. This Christ meant when he said Matth. 5. *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good workes, and glorifie your Father which is in heaven,* as the author of them, which doth them and not you. By the armour of righteousness on the right hand, and on the left, by honour and dishonour, &c. This armour he describeth more at large in the Epistle to the Ephesians and Thessalonians. He rehearseth there the girdle of verity, the breast plate of righteousness, the shoes of preparation to preach the Gospel, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, &c. This armour of righteousness, he calleth in his Epistle to the Ephesians, the Armour of God, both are to this end, that he may turne Christians from corporall and prophane armour, and admonish them, that they are a spirituall people, and therefore must be furnished with spirituall armour, wherewith they must alwayes fight a spirituall fight with spirituall enemies, which here he rehearseth, and sheweth that they doe assaile us both on the right hand and on the left. On the left hand he setteth dishonour, evill report, and that we are counted as deceivers, unknown, dying, chastised, sorrowing, poore, having nothing. For all these things come unto Christians, they are openly defamed, being reproached to their face, and by infamie falsely accused and railed on, counted as deceivers and followers of most wicked trades. They are as unknown although noble, all refusing to be friends with them because of the perilleous confession of the name of Christ, yet it many



times cometh to passe, that they that were their most familiar friends are ashamed of them, for that they have so evill a report, and are very ill spoken of among the chief, richest, wisest, and mightiest of the world. They are dying, that is, as sheep appointed to the slaughter, they look for death every moment, by reason of the great hatred and envie which the evill beare toward them, being alwayes persecuted of the chief of the world. They are chastised, for it oftentimes falleth out that they are stricken and beaten, and doe by other discomforts trie how they are envied of the world, and how great indignation the mighty of the world beare against them. They are as sorrowing, for all outward things are against them, and the whole world giveth many causes of griefes unto them. They are as poore, for there is no man of the world which will give them any thing, every man is ready to hurt and endamage them. Neither doe they possesse anything, for although all things be not taken from them at once, yet are they in that state that they dayly look for it. Against these Adversities and as enemies assailing us on the left hand, it is needfull that we be fortified and fenced with the Armour of God, lest that we either despaire or faint. Now this armour is a sure and invincible faith, continuall consolation and exhortation of the word of God, and a lively hope and undoubted expectation of the help of God. When being furnished with these, we suffer all things patiently, standing stedfast in our dutie, we declare our selves the sincere ministers of God, which the false Apostles and Hypocrites can never doe, although they saie that they serve God.

On the right hand he seeth glory, prayles, that we are counted true, knowne, do live, are not killed, doe rejoyce, enriching many, possessing all things. For it alwayes falleth out, that there be some which make account of Christians, and reverence them, among whom they are well reported of, and counted true in doctrine, wherefore some are not wanting which joine themselves unto them, and doe openly pretend friendship with them, freely pronouncing them to be the Ministers of God. Neither doe they dye so oft as they are brought into danger, and being chastened are not alwayes killed. Finally it cometh to passe by the consolation of the spirit, that they doe then most of all rejoyce, when they are in greatest affliction. For their heart rejoyceth in God, which joy bursteth forth, and uttereth it selfe in words, workes, and gestures. And albeit they be poore in corporall substance, yet are they never famished with hunger, but with the word of God doe enrich very many in spirit, and stand not in need of any thing, although they have nothing, for all things are in their hands. For that all creatures must serve the believers, as Christ saith: To him that believeth all things are possible. These things albeit they be the excellent gifts of God, notwithstanding if the

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fear of God should be absent, even they should be turned into enemies untous, and therefore it is needfull that we be strongly sensed against them with the armour of God, lest that they make us waxe proud, or insolently puffed up. A Christian man therefore is mervellously free, and addicted to nothing but to God alone, he setteth God only before his eyes, he endeavoureth to come streight unto him by the middle and hie way, between those things which assaile on the right hand and on the left, so that he is neither thrown down by adversity, nor puffed up by prosperity, but useth both most rightely, both to the glory of God and profit of his neighbours. We must, saith the Apostle, live such a life, while it is the time of grace and of the lively light of the Gospel, lest that while this day shineth we worke not, and that shall have shined unto us in vaine. This is the true ministry of God which only he alloweth, wherein he grant that we may serve him. and that most dutifully, Amen. **The 23 Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther concerning Tentation.** [Matth. 4. 1. to the 11. *Then was Jesus led aside of th Spirit into the Wildernes to be tempted. &c.*

**T**his text hath therefore been appointed to be read in the beginning of the soleme fast, which hath hitherto bin commanded for forty dayes, that the example of Christ being commended to Christians, they might thereby be provoked to keep that fast so much more religiously, which surely was nothing but a vaine trifl. First, for that no man is able to follow the example of Christ, who lived without any meate, forty dayes and so many night. Christ rather followed the example of *Moses* herein, then gave unto us any example to follow. *Moses* received the Law, was forty dayes & forty nights in the Mount Sinai without meate, so long time would Christ also fast, coming to bring and publish a new Law. Again, this fasting is a perverse thing, inasmuch as it was ordained of men. For albeit Christ fasted forty dayes, yet have wee no word of his whereby he hath commanded us also to doe the same. He did many other things besides, notwithstanding he will not have us also to do them: those things that he hath commanded us to doe, those things, I say, we must endeavour to do, that thereby we may obey his will. But the most Pestilent thing of all berein was, that wee took upon us, and used fasting as a good and meritorious worke, not to raine the flesh thereby, but to satisfie for sinnes, and to procure the favour of God unto our selves. Which wicked opinion made our fasting so foule, filthy, and abhominable before God, that no feasting, Banquets, gluttony, and drunkenesse are so filthy and detestable before him, and it were better to drink and bib day and night, then so to fast. And although this ungodly and wicked intent had not defiled our fasting, but that it had been ordained for chastising the body, nevertheless forasmuch as it was not left free, that every one might have taken it

him of his own accord, but it was enforced by the lawes of man, so that most which fasted, fasted against their wills, and with a grudging mind, it could not be but vaine and unacceptable to God. I speak not what other hurt it did to women with child, in young children, in the weak and aged. Wherefore we will more rightly consider this text, and see what manner of fasting it teacheth by the example of Christ. The Scripture commendeth unto us two sorts of fasting which are laudable: one, which is taken upon us of our own accord, to tame the flesh, Whereof the Apostle speaketh, *1 Cor. 6*, where he exhorteth us to be have our selves as the Ministers of God, by labours, watchings, and fastings among the rest. Another, which indeed is not taken upon us willingly, yet is willingly borne of us, when by reason of need and povertry we have not whereon to feed. Whereof *Paul* speaketh also in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, the fourth chapter: *Unto this house we both hunger and thirst.* And Christ *Matth. 9. When the Bridgroom shall be taken from them, then shall they fast.* This fasting Christ teacheth us by his present example, who being alone in the desert and having no meat, did suffer that hunger and need patiently. The first of these two fasts may when we please be left and broken with eating of meat: but this last must be suffered unill the Lord end and breake it. Now the cause why the Evangelist did so diligently first declare, that Jesus was led aside of the spirit into the wilderness, that he should there fast and be tempted, is this: lest that any taking upon him to fast of his own mind, and for his own commodities sake, should in vain endeavour to follow this example of Christ. For he must looke for the leading aside of the spirit, he will cause fasting and temptation enough: for he that without the leading aside of the spirit, should voluntarily bring himself into danger of hunger, or any other temptation, when by the blessing of God he hath what to eat and drinke, and whereby to live quietly, he, I say, should plainly tempt the Lord. We must not procure to our selves povertrie and temptation, they will come soone enough of themselves, only when they are sent of the Lord we must endeavour to beare them patiently. *Jesus*, as the Evangelist writeth, *was led aside of the spirit to the wilderness*, he did not choose to himself the wilderness. They are led with the spirit of God, which are the sonnes of God, *Romans 8*. The good things which the Lord giveth, he giveth for this, that wee may enjoy them with thanksgiving, not that we should neglect them, rempring him. Moreover, this historie is written unto us both to instruct, and also to exhort. To instruct, that we may learn hereby, that Christ by this his fasting, hunger, temptation and victory against Satan did serve us, and furthered our salvation: that whosoever beleeveeth in him, may never need, or be hurt by any temptation, but rather shall abound with good things in the midst of povertrie, and be safe in the midst

midest of temptation, for that his head and Lord Christ hath overcome all these things for him, whereof by faith he is most certaine, according as the Lord himself saith John 16. *Be ye of good comfort, I have overcome the world.* And if God could without meat nourish his Christ fortie dayes and so many nights, so he can also Christians. We are exhorted also here, that according to this example of Christ, we suffer hunger, temptation, and other necessities when they come, and when the case so requireth, to the glory of God and profit of our neighbours. And surely if we doe earnestly confesse and stick to the word of God, these things will undoubtedly come unto us. The present text therefore containeth a marvelous consolation and strengthening of faith, against the filthy and incredulous belly, which being diligently and faithfully weighed, our conscience shall be very much comforted and strengthened, that we may not be carefull for living, but trust with a full confidence, that God will give us plentifully those things that bee necessarie. Now, that this temptation also is incident unto us it is manifest. For as Christ was led aside into the wilderness, that is, was left alone of God, Angels, men, and all creatures, which might help him: so also falleth it out with us. We are led aside into the wilderness, we are forsaken and left alone. And this indeed is it, which especially grieveth us, to feele or perceive nothing whereunto we may trust, or from whence we may look for help. As when it lieth upon me to prepare sustenance for me and mine, and I have nothing at all of my selfe, neither perceive any help comming from any man, neither know where to look for any. This is to be led aside into the desert, and to be left alone, I being in this case, am in the true exercise of faith, then I learn how I my self am nothing, how weak my faith is, how great and rare a thing sound faith is, and how deep abominable incredulity is fetled in the hearts of all. But he that hath as yet a purse heaue with money, a seller full of wine, a garden replenished with grain, he is not yetted aside into the wilderness, or left alone, and therefore cannot feele temptation while these things remaine. Secondly, Satan commeth, and tempteth Christ with this care for the bellie, and diffidence of the goodnes of God, saying: *If thou be the sonne of God, command that these stones be made bread.* As if he should say according to the Dutch proverb: Trust in God, and in the meane season neglect to bake bread. Tarric till a roasted chicken flie into thy mouth. Go now and say that thou hast a God, who is carefull for thee. Where is now that thy heavenly Father, who hath so great a care of thee? Hath he not goodly forsaken thee? Eare now and drinke of thy faith, and let us see how thou shall be sufficed: it were well with thee, if thou couldest feed on stones. What a goodly sonne of God art thou? How fatherly doth he be have himself toward thee? He sendeth thee not so much as a peece

of bread, but suffereth thee here to be pined with hunger. Go now, and beleve yet that thou art the sonne of God, and he thy Father. Surely with these and such like cogitations he tempteth all the children of God, which Christ also undoubtedly felt, for he was not a block or stone, but very man, although pure from sinne, as he also continued, which is not given unto us. Now that the Devill tempted Christ with care of the bellie, diffidence and wicked desire, the answer of Christ doth sufficiently declare: *Man liueth not by bread alone.* Which is as much as if he had said: Thou wilt have me have regard to bread alone, thou dealest with me, as though I ought to have no other care but of meat and food for the belly. This temptation is very common, even among men that are of the most perfect sort, but they especially feele it, which when they are poore, have notwithstanding a wife and children to nourish and maintaine, and therewithall an emptie house. Hereupon Paul calleth covertousnesse the root of all evils, for that it is the right offspring of diffidence. And what thing else, but this diffidence and care of the bellie, is the cause that many are so loath to marrie? what else doth hold so many thousand men in whoredom and unchast living, and detaineth them from marriage, but this immoderate care of the bellie, and ungodly feare lest they should be pined and perish with hunger? But the present deed and example of Christ should be thought upon, who although he had been without meat fortie dayes and so many nights, yet was he not quite forsaken and left destitute. But the Angels at the last came, and ministred all things necessary unto him. Thirdly, we may see here how Christ meeteth with this temptation of the belly, and overcometh it. He seeth nothing indeed but stones and that which cannot be eaten, therefore from those things that were before his eyes he removeth his mind to the word of God, thereby both strengthening himselfe, and overthrowing the Divell. On which word Christians, especially when Poverty presseth them, and all things seeme to bee turned into stones, and the mind doth now tremble for feare of hunger: ought with a strong faith to lay hold, and answer the temptation that would quite discourage them: What if the whole world were full of bread? yet doth not man live by bread alone, there is need of another thing, that is of the word of God. Now so farre much as these words are of marvelous force and efficacie, we must a little stand upon them, and endeavour to declare them, and not lightly passe them over. These words therefore Christ took out of the fifth book of Moses, Deut. 8. 3. where Moses speaketh thus unto the Israelites: *The Lord thy God humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and feed thee with Manna, which neither thou nor thy fathers knew of, to make thee know that a man doth not live by bread only,*  
but

but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord. Which is as much as if he had said: Whereas he suffered thee to hunger, and yet thou didst not perish, thou mayest thereby easily know, that it is God which sustaineth thee by his word, even without bread. For if we did live and were nourished by bread alone, it were necessarie that we should be alwaies filled with bread. But it is the word of God that nourisheth us, which he will have preached, that we may know that he is our God, and that he will shew himself bountifull and gracious unto us. We are taught therefore by this answer of Christ, and testimony of *Moses*, that he which beleeveth in the word of God, shall undoubtedly have experience of two things. First, that when meat is wanting, and he is pinched with hunger he is as well sustained and strengthened by this word, that he die not or perish with hunger, as if he might abundantly enjoy meat, this word of God, which he obtaineth in heart, nourishing and strengthening him without meat and drinke. And if he have but a little meat, he shall perceive that little, although it were but even one peece of bread, to feed and nourish him no lesse, then if he did enjoy princely fare. For not by bread, but by the word of God the body is nourished and preserved, like as by it it was made, as also all other things, like as by the word they were created, so also by it are they preserved. The other thing, which we are here taught, that the beleever shall have experience of, is, that at the length he shall assuredly receive bread, from whence soever it come, yea although it should raine downe from heaven, as Manna did to the Israelites, in a place where no other bread could be gotten. Let a Christian quietly promise to himself and looke for these two things, his hope cannot be frustrated, either he shall have in hunger somewhat to eat from whence soever it be given him, or his hunger shall be made so tolerable unto him, that he shall be no lesse fed, then if he were fed with bread, the power of the word of God nourishing and sustaining him. Those things that I have said of bread that is, of meat, are also to be understood of drinke, apparall, house, and all things necessarie unto this life. It may be indeed that a godly man doe need apparell, or an house, &c. but at length he shall have them. The leaves falling from the trees shall sooner be turned into coats and cloaks, then we can be left naked, or surely those garments which we have shall not wax old, which the Israelites tried, whose cloaths and shoes in the desert were not torne, as also a most wide wilderness was unto them in stead of houses, places unpassable, passable, unwarrie, warrie, finally the stony rocks, fountains of water. For the word of God standeth sure and unmoveable: The Lord is carefull for us. And Paul saith: God giveth us abundantly all things to enjoy. 1 Pet. 5. 7. 1 Tim. 6. 17. Also Christ saith Mat. 6. Seek first the

Kingdom of God, and all things shall be ministred unto you, only be carefull for nothing. Such words and promises of God must needs remaine true for ever, and therefore no good thing can be wanting to them that beleeye. This even daily experience may teach us. We see commonly poor folks and their children to be better liking then many rich folkes and their children, for that the use of their small sustenance is by the blessing of God increased, and doth much more feed and nourish them, then all that most abundant sustenance doth feed and nourish the rich. Now, whereas the wicked doe sometime suffer need, in the time of famine some doe even dye through hunger, that is, the speciall vengeance of God, as is also the pestilence, war, and such like. Otherwise it plainly appeareth, that not meat, but God doth feed and sustain us. Howbeit whereas God feedeth the world with bread, and not with his word alone without bread, he therefore doth it, that he may so hide his work, and exercise our faith. So he commanded the Israelites, that they should prepare themselves to battell, and yet he would not have the victory to be gotten by their sword and labour: but he himself would by meanes of their sword and labour, overcome and vanquish the enemies. Here also it might be said, that the Souldier doth slay and overcome the enemies, not by his sword alone, but by the word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Whereupon David saith Ps. 44. *I will not trust in my bow, it is not my sword that can save me.* And again. *He is not delighted in any mans leggs: a man of great might is not delivered by much strength: a horse is but a vaine thing to save a man, &c.* Ps. 147. 10. Nevertheless God useth men, swords, horses, and bowes, howbeit not by the power and strength of them, but by them as by certaine meanes or instruments, he himself fighteth and overcommeth. This he hath sufficiently declared oftentimes, when he hath overthrowen the enemies and delivered his people, which surely he daily doth, when the case so requireth. After the same sort God useth bread also, by it, forasmuch as it is made for that use, he feedeth us, howbeit when it is wanting, he neverthelesse feedeth them that bee his, even by his word, without bread, as he doth at other times by bread, so that bread doth as it were worke under God, as the Apostles and Preachers of the word in spirituall and evangelicall meat serve under him, as it is mentioned. 1 Cor. 3. For as God useth their ministrie to teach men, he himselfe by his spirit speaking in their hearts through it, and doing all things alone, which he both is able to doe, and often times wont to doe without the ministrie of the Preachers of his word, although he will not in the meane season have the ministrie of his to be dispised, and so himselfe tempted: so to the nourishing of our outward man, he outwardly useth bread, although he doth make by his word inwardly, that we be nourished and strengthened, which he can

as well doe, and is wont to doe when bread is away, that all our nourishment may be attributed to the word, and not to bread, which hee useth as an instrument, but yet of no necessitie. That J may speake briefly, all creatures doe as it were serve under him, and are his instruments, without which notwithstanding he is able, and oftentimes wont to worke: by this meanes providing, that we may depend on his word alone, neither trusting more unto him, when we have bread and other things which our life useth, neither lesse when we want them, but may use them with giving of thanks when he bestoweth them upon us, when otherwise, may patiently be without them, being certain neverthelesse, that we shall live and be nourished in both times, both when we have them, and when we have them not. And by this faith that vaine and ungodly care of the belly, greedy desire of things, and carefullnesse of life are overcome. *Then the Devill tooke him up into the holy City, &c.* This temptation is quite contrary to the former. He assaileth us with such temptation also, whereby he goeth about to move us to tempt God, even as he willeth Christ to cast himself down from a pinnacle of the temple, & so tempt God, when there were ladders, by which he might descend, & that this temptation provoketh to tempt God, it is manifest even by the answer of Christ, who answereth Satan in this manner: *It is written; Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* Hereby he signifieth, that the Divell would provoke him to tempt God. Now this temptation doth not amisse follow the former. For when the Devill perceiveth the heart, that in poverty and necessity it trusteth in God, he by and by maketh an end of tempting by care of the belly and desire of things, as being weaker then that by it he may overthrow one so strong in faith. He thinketh therefore with himself: If he professe himself to be of so religious and assured a mind, J will on this side also give occasion to sinne. And so he setteth upon him on the right side, affirming that that is to be beleaved, which the Lord hath neither spoken, nor commanded to be beleaved. As is this: If hee should bring thee to such madnes, that when thou hast bread at home given thee of God, as he of his goodnes giveth unto us every day, thou wouldest not use it, but wouldest procure to thy self necessitie and hunger, saying: J must trust in God, I will not feed on this earthly bread, I will tarry till God give me other from heaven. This were to tempt God. For he doth not command thee to beleave, that that thing shall come unto thee whereof thou hast need, if it be already come of his liberalitie. For why shouldest thou beleave that he will give that, which thou hast already of his gift? Thou seest therefore that the Divell doth here object a certaine necessitie and need unto Christ, where there is none. For there was a sufficient meane to descend from the pinnacle of the temple, neither was it reason to attempt this new unaccustomed



stomed and unnecessary meane whereunto Satan perswaded. More-  
 over allegorically we may by this doing of Satan perceiue his craft and  
 subtiltie. *Hee took Iesus, saith the Evangelist, into the holy City, and  
 set him on a Pinnacle of the Temple.* By this temptation he replenisheth  
 men with cogitations that seeme most holy, that they may thinke  
 themselves most plentifully endued with faith, and  
 to stand in a very holy place, when as notwithstanding they  
 are set not in the Temple, but on the Temple, that is, not in the sin-  
 ceritie of faith, but in a vaine outward shew of faith. Neuerthelesse  
 he is in the meane season in the holy citie, because that this kind of  
 men is wont to be no where but among Christians, where the word  
 of the Lord and the preaching of truth is daily heard, who also like  
 unto Satan, haue sentences of Scripture in a readinesse as concerning  
 the words, although they alwayes pervert and wrest them to their own  
 error and false imaginations. So Satan recited hereunto Christ out  
 of the 91. Psalme, that God doth command his Angels concerning his  
 children, that they keep them, lifting them up with their hands. But  
 the deceiver concealed that which is added, that is, in their wayes.  
 For thus hath the Psalme 91, 11. *He will giue his Angels charge over  
 thee, to keep thee in all thy wayes, &c.* So that the custodie of Angels  
 is not by the commandement promised vntrous, unlesse we walke in  
 our wayes which he hath prescribed us. If we walke in them, we shall  
 assuredly be kept of Angels. Howbeit the Devill saith nothing of the  
 wayes of the Lord, but promiset by corrupting the saying of the  
 Psalme, that it is commanded to the Angels, to keep us in what wayes  
 soeuer, whereof the Lord hath commanded nothing. And this is Satans  
 seducing, and perswasion to tempt God. But this temptation doth  
 not easily happen in these outward things, as are bread, apparell, houses,  
 &c. Thou mayest find indeed some rash heads, which for no cause doe  
 put their life, goods, and good name in great danger, as they doe  
 which goe on warfare of their own accord, which leap rashly into most  
 deep waters, or go voluntary into other no small dangers. Of whom  
 Iesus the sonne of Syrach saith: *He that loveth perill, shall perish in it.*  
 Ecclesi. 3, 27. Whereof the Germaines haue a proverb: *Self doe, self  
 haue: what every one followeth, that he cometh unto.* So is it al-  
 most usual that none are oftner drowned, then they that are most exer-  
 cised in swimming, and none fall more perilously, then they which use  
 to attempt high matters. But he shall be hardly found, which having  
 a false and overmuch confidence in God, attempteth any such thing,  
 or useth not the things present, as bread, apparell, house, and  
 such like, looking with perill, while God provide otherwise for him  
 by miracle. We read of a certaine Heremite, who because he had vows  
 ed to take bread of no man, brought himself into perill by hunger,

and

and so perished, and undoubredly went strait unto hell, because of that false faith and tempting of God, which he learned no other where but of the devill, so that his madnesse was altogether like that, whereunto Satan here perswadeth Christ, to wit that he should cast himself down from a pinnacle of the temple. Howbeit thou shalt find very few which doe follow this Heremite, and doe differre to enjoy corporall things present for that they hope that God will give them other from heaven.

But in spirituall things, which concern the nourishment, not of the body, but of the soule, this tentation is wont to be both mighty and often. In these God hath appointed a certaine manner, whereby the soule may be fed, nourished and strengthened, both most commodiously, and also most blessedly, so that no good thing at all can be wanting unto it. This nourishment, this strength, this salvation, is Christ our Saviour, in whom the father hath most abundantly offered and given all good things. But there are very few which desire him, the most part seek some other where, whereby their soules may live, and obtaine salvation. Such are all they which seek salvation by their workes. These are they whom Satan having set on a pinnacle of the temple, biddeth them cast themselves down, and they obey him. They descend whereas is no way: that is, they beleeve and trust in God, yet so, as they trust also in their own workes, in which is no place at all for faith and trust, no way or path unto God, wherefore throwing themselves down headlong, they break their neck, falling into utter desperation. Now Satan perswadeth miserable men unto this madnesse, as also he perswaded Christ to cast himself down from a pinnacle of the temple, by places of Scripture perverted and misapplied, wherein workes are commanded, whereby he maketh them beleeve, that the Angels shall keep them, that is, that they shall be supported of God, when as indeed they can by nothing so offend him, as by that mad trust and confidence in workes. For they acknowledge not, that the Scripture doth no where require workes without faith, or that it doth every where require a sound and lively faith from which workes proceed. We have at large declared who are such, namely, incredulous hypocrites, which are given to workes without faith, which falsely boast of the name of Christians, challenging to themselves to be chiefe in the flock of Christ. For this tentation must be in the holy citie. Now these two tentations, and the causes of them doe greatly differ. In the former cause why men doe not beleeve is need and hunger, for they are thereby moved to distrust God, and dispaire of his goodnes. In the latter, the cause why they doe not beleeve is overmuch abundance, for that miserable men are full of most plentiful and abundant treasure, so that they loath it, coveting to have some other speciall thing, whereby they may procure the salvation of their

their soules. So our case standeth ill in both respects: If we have nothing we despair, and distrust God: if we have plenty of things, we loath them, and require other, being then also void of faith. Concerning the first, we flie and hate scarcitie and seek plenty: concerning the latter, we seeke scarcitie, and flie plenty. Howsoever God dealeth with us, we are not content: our incredulitie is a bottomlesse pit of malice and ungodlinesse. *Again the Diuell took him up into an exceeding high mountaine.* Here he tempteth with vaine glory and power of the world, as by the words of the devill doth plainly appeare, who shewing Christ the kingdomes of the world, offered them to him, if he would worship him. By this tentation they are overcome which revolt from faith, that they may enjoy glory and power here, or at least do so temper their faith that they lose not these things: In the number of these are all heriticks and troublers of the Church, which doe therefore either leave, or oppugne the sinceritie of faith, that being exempted out of the common number they may be extolled on high. So we may place this tentation on the right hand, as the first assaileth us on the left. For as the first tentation is of adversitie, whereby we are moved to indignation, impatiencie, and diffidence, so this third tentation is of prosperitie, whereby we are provoked to delights, glory, pleasures, and whatsoever is excellent and delectable in the world. The second tentation is altogether spirituall, whereby Satan by deceit, and merve- lous and secret subtiltie goeth about to withdraw man from faith. For whom he cannot overcome with povertie, scarcitie, necessitie, and miserie, then he tempteth with riches, favour, glory, delights, power, &c. and so he assaileth us on either side, yea when he prevaieth by neither way, he goeth about, as *Peter* saith, and attempteth all meanes, that whom he can overcome neither by adversitie, that is, by the first tentation, nor by prosperitie, that is, by the third tentation, he may overcome either by error, blindness, or false understanding of the Scriptures, that is, by the second tentation which is spirituall, and therefore most hurtfull. By which if he prevale against any, they are also overcome both on the left side and on the right. For whether they suffer such povertie, or enjoy plenty of things, whether they contend, or yeeld unto all things, both is nothing: while they are in error, either patience in adversitie or constancie in prosperitie can be of no importance. For in both even heriticks oftentimes do notably excell, and it is a practice of the diuell oftentimes, to faine himself overcome in the first and third tentation, that he may reigne victour by the second. He can be content that they that be his doe often times suffer povertie patiently, and doe also contemne the world, although they do neither of both with a simple heart, and sincere faith. Every one therefore of these three tentations is grievous and very hard, but the middle one is most perillous of all,

all, for it assaileth the doctrine of faith, and is spirituall and wont to deceive in spirituall things. The other two also doe assaile faith, howbeit in these outward things, as aduersitie and prosperitie, although they doe also urge us very sore. For it cannot be a litle grievous to suffer povertie, to want bread, and such other things necessary. Again it is no lesse grievous to neglect, and wholly to deny favour, glory, riches, friends, companions, and other commodities which we have. But an entire and sound faith in the word of God can performe both notably, and if it be a strong faith, they seem very easie and delectable unto it. We cannot certainly know the order of these tentations which happened to Christ, for that the Evangelists have not described them after one order. For *Luke* hath set that last, which *Matthew* hath set in the midst, and that which *Matthew* hath set last, *Luke* hath placed in the midst. But there doth not so much consist in the order. Notwithstanding when any will teach the people concerning these tentations, it were better to follow the order of *Luke*. For he may fitly say, and thus rehearse, that Satan doth first tempt us with povertie and aduersitie, whereby if he prevaile not, that he tempteth us with prosperitie and glory, which if he doe in vaine, that he assaileth us with all his might, and tempteth us with error, lyes, delusion, and other spirituall subtilties. Yet neither is this order alwayes observed of Satan: but he tempteth Christians sometime with the first, sometime with the third temptation, as he hath & seeth occasion. *Matthew* was not careful to rehearse them in that order, which they have almost by their own nature, & which may be commodious for him that shall teach of them. Yea it may be that they hapned not unto Christ by any certain order, but that he was assailed of Satan one day with this, another day with that, during the space of those forty days, as Satan thought it most convenient & meet for his purpose. And behold, the Angels came and ministered unto him. This I thinke was done corporally, that they having taken bodies appeared and ministered unto him meat and drink, as his servitors at the table, and Ministers of all other things necessary for his life. Yea and I thinke that the devill also appeared unto him in a corporall forme perhaps as an Angell. For in that he took Christ, and set him on a pinacle of the temple: also whereas in a moment he shewed him all the kingdoms of the world, he sufficiently declared, that he was more then a man, and such a one surely he shewed himself openly, when he offered that hee would give unto him those Kingdoms, and required that he would worship him. And undoubtably he did not appeare like a devill when he did these things, for he loveth to appeare after a faire sort especially when he will lie and deceive: for then he transformeth himself into an Angell of light, as *Paul* witnesseth. Now this is written chiefly for our consolation, that we may not doubt, that many Angels shall minister

minister unto us, when one devill tempteth us, if we fight valiantly. For if we stand fast in faith, it is so farre of, that God will suffer us to be troubled and pinched with povertie, more then is meet, that he will sooner send his Angels to minister unto us, to be our Butlers, our Cookes, and to help us with their minister in all necessitie. Neither are these things written for Christs cause, whom they cannot profit, but they are written for us, that we may learne to beleve, that if the Angels ministered unto him, they shall also when the case so requireth minister unto us his brethren and members. The Lord give us faith to beleve this. **The 24. Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, concerning the leading of a godly life.** [Ephes. 5. 1. to the 9]

Verse 8. *Be ye therefore followers of God as deare children, &c.*

**T**His text is exhortatory, wherein *Paul*, according to his manner, and accustomed care for the brethren, exhorteth Christians not to leave or slack the study and care of godlines, and give themselves to sloathfulness, but to declare by their works the word that they have learned of him, that is, to shew it forth by the fruits of faith, and make it plausible and honourable, to the edifying of the Heathen, least that by the vices of them which professe the doctrine of the Gospel, they take occasion to hate that doctrine, and so be offended by them, whom it did behove to winne them unto Christ. *Be ye therefore followers of God as deare Children.* First, therefore he exhorteth us, forasmuch as we are by Christ made the sonnes of God, to imitate such a father, as dear children. Mervelous gently and alluringly he speaketh unto us, calling us deare children, that by the love of God our father toward us, hee may provoke us to love him again, and them whom he commandeth us to love, even as he hath loved us first. But how hath he loved us? Surely not after that common sort alone, whereby in this life hee nourisheth and sustaineth us being unworthy, together with all the ungodly: making his Sun to arise on the good, and on the evil, and sending raine on the just and unjust: whereof Christ speaketh *Mat. 5. Bee ye perfect as your Father is perfect.* But he loveth us also after another speciall manner, in that he hath given his sonne for us. *Iohn 3.* For he hath abundantly bestowed upon us all temporall and also eternall good things, yea his own self, and hath as it were poured himself with all that he is, hath, and can, into us who were sinners, unworthy enemies, and servants of Satan, so that he could not doe and give unto us more and greater things. Now he, whom this divine fire of love which filleth heaven and earth, and yet is not comprehended, doth not kindle and inflame to love likewise his neighbour, whosoever hee be, friend, or enemy, he I say, will neither by law, precepts, doctrine, threatnings, and force be ever moved to godlines and love. *Walk,* saith the Apostle, *in love,* whereby he signifieth that our life should be nothing

thing else; but meer love. Howbeit he will not have us walke in the love of the world, which in love seeketh those things which are his own, and loveth so long as there is any thing, whereby it looketh for commoditie and lucre. Therefore he saith: *Even as Christ hath loved us, who neither sought nor could look for any profit or commoditie of us, and yet he loved us so greatly, that he gave himself for us, and not only his other good things which he giveth us daily, and he so gave himself for us, that he might be an oblation and sacrifice, to obtaine the good will and favour of the father toward us, and to bring to passe, that we might now have God a mercifull and favourable father, being become his true children and heries, &c.* So also it becometh us to give and lend, not only to our friends, but also to our enemies, neither to count this sufficient, but to be readie also even to dye both for friends and foes, thinking nothing else, but that we may serve and profite our neighbours both in body and goods, as long as we shall be in the pilgrimage of this life, seeing that we possesse all things being given unto us by Christ. *To be an offering and a sacrifice of a sweet smelling favour to God.* This manner of speech Paul borrowed out of the old Testament, wherein those corporall sacrifices are written oftentimes to have yeilded to the Lord a sweet Saviour, that is, to have been acceptable unto him. Notwithstanding that was not because of the work and sacrifice in it self, as the Jewes falsely thought, and therefore were very often reproved of the Prophets, but for Christs sake who was to come, the one and only sacrifice of a good favour, whom all those sacrifices of the law did shadow forth, and represent. Wherefore that which Paul here saith, is almost as if he had said: All the sacrifices of the old Testament have an end, they can now be of no price: Christ himself is the only sacrifice, which yeeldeth unto God a sweet smelling favour, that is, is pleasing and acceptable unto him, whereby we are assured that we are acceptable unto God, and doe please him. Wherefore there is no other sacrifice in the Church which may be offered for us, beside this only sacrifice, which being once offered, hath at once satisfied for the sinne of all the Elect. And although we after the example of this sacrifice, do offer our bodies to God, as Paul teacheth *Romans 12.* yet we offer them not either for our selves or for other, forasmuch as that is proper to Christ, the only sacrifice, whereby the salvation of all is obtained. Wherefore those things smell most stinkingly before God, whatsoever men offer with this mind, as though they would satisfie for their own sinnes, or for the sinnes of other, whereof we both have and will elsewhere speak more.

But fornication, and all uncleannesse, or covetousnesse, let it not be once named among you. By the name of uncleannes beside fornication he understandeth all lust, and lecherous filthines which is committed

committed out of matrimonie, which for the filthinesse of them he doth not vouchsafe to rehearse by name, as *Rom. 1.* he speaketh very grossely of them, Although in matrimony also a meane may be exceeded, and it is the duty of Christians so to moderate the use of marriage, that they require and performe due love and benevolence only for a voyding fornication, but we are fallen so far, that they are most rare, which come together only for procreation of children & to avoid fornication, which surely were best, and should very well become us. Now the Apostle saith, *Let it not be once named among you*, that is, be so far from these evils, that they may not so much as be spoken of you. Albeit it will never come to passe in this exile, that none among Christians be weak, and doe not oftentimes fall, yet true Christians will never winke at those things: they will reprove, amend, put away, cover, and cure whatsoever such thing shall burst forth amongst them, that the heathen may not be offended and say: See what vices the Christians suffer among themselves, how uncleane and lewd a life doe they lead? thinking that all their whole life is defiled with like vices as is their own. We must needs confesse, that among Christians some do oftentimes fall, which we must needs beare, it is well if only the better part lieth well, and winketh not at their sinnes, neither teacheth them, but rather reproveth and amendeth them. So *Paul* exhorteth *Gal. 6.* that they which are spirituall will restore them that offend, with the spirit of meeknesse. And he sharply reproveth the Corinthians, for that they did lightly passe over many sinnes, of certaine persons. For sinne being reprehended and punished, is now counted as no sinne, neither can the Church be blamed because of it. After the same sort heed must be taken, that covetousnes be not named among Christians, that is, that they become notorious by the name thereof, which they shall bring to pass, if, when it chanceth that covetous men be amongst them, or one useth deceit toward another in their busines and affaires, or some contend in judgement for those outward things, if I say, they doe not winke hereat, but doe reprove and correct such, that the sinceritie of the doctrine of the Gospel may obtaine due estimation among the people, and there may be no cause openly to dispraise our ministrie. *2 Cor. 6.* These things have I spoken because of them, who as soone as they see that all things do not resemble and shew forth a holinesse among Christians, and that some do stumble and fall, do think, that there is no Christian left, that the Gospel is to no purpose, and that all things are taught and done in vaine. As though the life of Christians were now without fight victory and due triumph over sinne being obtained, when as rather it is a warfare and a continuall fight. Whereas therefore they doe now fight and are in the camp, it is no marvel if some flie away, if some be wounded, if some fall, yea and be even slaine out-right

outright. War is not made without perill and hurt, if it be earnest war.

*As it becometh Saints.* This he addeth to his exhortation, as a reason and cause shewing why it lieth upon Christians, to take heed that they be not defamed by these names: For they are Saints, now it becometh such to be chaste, bountifull, and ready to give, to teach and doe the same. Thou seest here, that *Paul* calleth Christians Saints, while they remaine yet in this life, and are pressed with flesh and blood, from which nothing cometh but sinne, which he doth undoubtedly not for their good works, but because of the sanctifying blood of Christ, as he witnesseth 1 Cor. 6. *But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Iesus, and by the spirit of our God.* Forasmuch therefore as we are Saints, it is meet that wee should shew the same in our works, and albeit we be as yet weak, nevertheless we must daily endeavour to live purely, and far from covetousnes, to the praise and glory of God, and edifying of our neighbours, even the Heathen. *Neither filthines.* All unchaste and lewd words of bawdrie, uncleanner, and lecherous matters, he calleth filthines, of which words abundance is wont to be powred forth in Innes and visitalling houses, in the time of eating, drinking, and playing. These the Grecians used very freely and accustomedly more then others, as their own Poets and other writers do sufficiently witnes. But he especially reproveth here those lewd and wanton words, which are spoken openly without shame, which stirre up wicked & unchaste thoughts, and are cause of many offences, especially being spoken among youth, according to that saying: *Evill speakings corrupt good manners,* 1 Cor. 15. 33. as the Apostle writeth to the Corinthians. And if any Christians should be so carelesse of their tongue, that such words should come from them, such must be chastised of the Church, and if they do not amend, they must not be suffered, lest because of them the whole Church be ill reported of, as though these things were either taught among Christians, or suffered to be unpunished, as it is wont to be among the Heathen. *Neither foolish talking.* Fables and other trifling speeches and jests are called foolish talking, which the Grecians also were wont to use more then other nations, being very witty to invent such vaine speeches. Of this sort are those tales, which our women and maidens are wont to tell, spinning at the distaffe, also the termes and verses of juplers and such like fellowes, and many common songs, which are partly even filthy, and partly containe other trifling and vaine things. But especially it is unseemly and inconvenient for Christians to use such foolish and trifling talke, when they come together to heare the word of God, or to read and search the Scriptures, and yet notwithstanding almost even such folly happeneth among them, when many come together. For albeit they begin with serious

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matters, neverthelesse they are mervelous easily brought unto trifles: from earnest and holy matters, to ridiculous and vain speeches, where-with both the time is spent in vain, and better things are neglected. So have they been wont certaine yeares hitherto, at every feast of Easter in the time of preaching to tell some ridiculous tale to stirre up the People from sleep. They did not unlike at the Feast of the nativity of Christ, using songs or Carols, wherein they said, they made discourses of the birth and infancy of Iesus, howbeit ridiculous meeter and words, moving rather laughter then devotion, as they called it: Also, they sung many fained fables of the wise men, whom they made: three Kings, of the passion of the Lord, of the punishment of *Dorothea*, & many other, all which were nothing but foolish talking and vain inventions, altogether unworthy of Christians. To the number of these I might well add those histories of Saints, which they call the Legends, and that flood of lies, of miracles and pilgrimages to images, and monuments of Saints, Masses, & worshipings of Saints, indulgences and innumerable other, not so much foolish as ungodly inventions, which in the Assemblies of the Church, were wont to be chiefly extolled in the Pulpit, which were so contrary to godlines, that they deserve much rather to be called the wicked inventions of Satan, then foolish imaginations of men. For they did not as ridiculous lies are wont to doe, corrupt good manners only, of which *Paul* speaketh especially here, but they did wholly overthrow faith, and put out of place the word of God, so that they did not only not beseech Saines, but did plainly abolish all Saints. Those former therefore were fables and tales of men, which are not believed, neither esteemed any thing of, but rather laugh at although in the meane season they corrupt good manners, withdraw Christians from serious matters, and make them slack and slothfull. But these latter are diabolish fables, which are believed for a truth, and counted for serious, yea and heavenly matters, when as notwithstanding they be nothing els but fained devices of Satan, wherby he with his Angells deludeth and mocketh us. *Neither lifting*, Hereby he understandeth all pleasant speeches, which they whom they call Iesters are wont to use, to make men merry, which by pleasant discourses, and merry termes doe move laughter, and stirre up mens mindes to mirth, and cheerefulness, which is wont to be usuall in civill Banquers, and when civill companions meet together. This jesting the heathen counted for a vertue, especially *Aristotle*. But *Paul* among Christians giveth it place among vices. For Christians have other speeches, whereby they may recreate and cheere themselves in Christ, which also doe bring some profit with them, although it easily happeneth, that many Christians do offend oftentimes herein. But they that are true Christians, doe never praise it, neither doe suffer that any should

should give himselfe to this jesting, and study to exceed therein, but they reprove and prohibit him, especially in the Church, in the time of preaching and teaching. For Christ hath witnessed, that we shall in the last day give an account of every idle word. It is meet indeed that Christians be an elegant and amiable people, but therewithall grave, that there may be seen in them a severe gentleness, and a gentle severity, as the life of Christ is described unto us in the Gospell.

*Things which are not comely, but rather giving of thanks.* This comprehendeth all idle words, which want a proper name. Now I call them idle words which make neither to the edifying of faith, nor to the use of our corporall life. For there be things enough both profitable and pleasant, which when it pleaseth us to speake, we talke of in the short time of this life, as of Christ, of love, and other things either necessary or profitable. Whereof Paul admonisheth when he saith: *but rather giving of Thanks.* For our dayly speech ought to be the praise of God, and giving of thanks to him, as well privately, as publicly in sermons, for such infinit good things, as he hath given unto us in Christ, even unspeakeable. But such is the manner of our reason and nature, that necessary and profitable things are neglected, and foolish and frivolous things are chiefly regarded. Now marke here, if Paul doth not suffer in Christians speeches, that be only pleasant and tending to mirth, what thinkest thou would he say of that pestilent backbiting and slandering, which reigneth now in all companies of men, even them that be private, when too oftentimes doe talke together? Yea what would he say of them which openly in sermons doe as it were bite and rent one another with reproachfull words, and maliciously accuse and speak evill of one another? For this ye know, that no whoremonger, neither uncleane person, nor covetous person, which is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. In these words he doth very plainly pronounce against them which are infected with such vices: that they are heathen under the name of Christians, how many soever doe not bring forth the fruits of faith. This is a brieft and a certain sentence: He that is a fornicator, hath denied that faith, an uncleane person hath denied the faith, a covetous person hath denied the faith, all such are Apostates, perjured, and traitorous toward God: as Paul writeth also unto Timothy, of him that neglecteth them that be of his familie: *If there be any, saith he, that provideth not for his own, and namely for them of his household, he denyeth the faith, and is worse then an Infidell.* 1 Tim. 5. 8. How could he more severely and terribly strait us from vices? For he saith: *For this ye know,* as if he said: Doe not so much as doubt, count it not for a play, neither let it be sport unto you, neither comfort your selves with vain hope of a Christian name, and for that ye are counted Christians, these things shall profit you no

then it profited the Jewes, that they were the children of *Abraham*, and disciples of *Moses*. It was spoken to all which Christ saith *Matth. 7.* *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdome of heauen, but he that doth the will of my father which is in heauen*: there is need of doing, and our faith must be proved by works. Whom therefore that great force of heavenly fire shall not inflame unto godlines, that is, the admonition of the incomparable love of God towards us, which he set in the first place, him let these horrible threatenings of hell fire move, to wit, whereas he witnesseth, that as many as will not follow God, and walke in love, and shew forth their faith by their workes, are neither the sonnes of God, nor heires of his kingdom, whereupon it followeth, that they are undoubtedly heires with Satan of hell fire. Whom therefore these two so mighty provokements shall not stirre up to the feare of God and godlines, with all diligence to doe the duty of a Christian, he is plainly a block and a stone, having a heart harder then the Anvill, as *Job* saith. He particularly reproveth a covetous person, and pronounceth him an Idolater or worshipper of Images, whereby surely he declareth, how greatly he is displeased with them that are infected with this vice, and in his third chapter of his Epistle to the *Colossians* he saith also the same thing of him. The cause hereof I thinke to be this: other sinners use only that thing, wherein they offend, and make it serve their lust and desire: so the fornicator and uncleane person use their body to pleasure: the proud person useth riches, learning, the favour of men, and such like, unto glory: onely this miserable Idolater is a slave to his money and riches, and his sinne is, that he spareth his money and goods, keepeth and hordeth them up, dareth not apply them neither to his own use, nor to the use of other, but doth plainly serve and worship them as his god, and so much esteemeth them, that he would sooner lose and suffer to perish the kingdome of God, then he would spend his money, or give the value of a rush toward the maintaining either of a preacher, or an instructor of youth, whereby the word of God and his kingdome might be furthered. Forasmuch therefore, as all the trust & hope of such a man is reposed in money, and not in God alone, who giveth him abundantly whereby to live, money is worthily called his God, and he himself said to be an Idolater, and hath no inheritance in the Kingdome of heaven. What can be invented more filthy and pestilent then this disease? Wo unto thee, incredulitie, how an abominable and hurtfull evill art thou? Let no man deceive you with vain words. These are the vaine words of them which extenuate and make light of fornication and such like sinnes, as though they were not, greatly evill, or did so much offend God. There were not wanting Philosophers and Poets among the Heathen, which counted all use of lechery

lechery beside only adulterie, lawfull, as a thing naturall, as is to use meate and drinke. So saith *Terence*: It is not a wickednes, beleere me, for a young man to follow harlots, &c. But this is to be ignorant of God, and to live according to the fore of concupiscence, as the Gentiles were wont to doe. And yet such vaine words are those, which albeit they have some like of truth, yet indeed are trifling, and shall not excuse any. So covetousnesse doth not want a cloak and pretence for it self: for him that seeketh his own with the discommoditie of others, they call a good husband, industrious, one that looketh to his businesse, although in the meane while the poore perish with hunger, or are otherwise afflicted above their strength. Wherefore such speeches are prophane and heathnisch, by which love is extinguished, and they which give eare to them and beleere them, are deluded with a vaine hope. For, for such things commeth the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. This is another light which we ought to follow, leaving the obscure light of reason, which doth not greatly condemne fornication, uncleannes, covetousnesse, &c. This our light witnesseth, that for such things the wrath of God commeth upon unbelievers, whom he calleth the children of disobedience, and therefore cannot abide to beleere the word of God, and to give themselves to the obedience of faith. This *Paul* declareth *1 Cor. 10.* by many examples, where he saith that a great part of the people was slaine for fornication, of which deed is spoken also *Numb. 25.* For violence also, covetousnesse, and uncleannesse, the whole world was destroyed by the flood. Wherefore a sufficient sharp, yea and a certaine vengeance abideth them that are infected with these wickedneses. Now he calleth them the children of disobedience, that is, of incredulity, which is as much as if he had said: of them that have revolted from the faith, and have renounced Christ. Hereby therefore we see and learne, that he that doth not approve his faith by workes, is no better then a Heathen, yea worse, inasmuch as he hath renounced Christ, and denyed the faith once received. For this cause therefore the vengeance and wrath of God shall come upon them that are such, as we Germanes do now trie, unto whom God sendeth abundantly the pestilence, famine, and cruell warres. Let men take heed they give no eare to those deceivers, which with vaine words promise that those finnes shall escape unpunished: Let those slack and slouthfull Christians beware, who although they be not blind Heathen, but know well that uncleannes and covetousnes are finnes, and thinke or teach no otherwise, doe neverthelesse live wickedly, resting upon faith, whereby they hope that they shall obtaine salvation without workes, forasmuch as workes doe not save: Yea albeit they very well know, that faith without workes is a fained faith, and that wortheie fruits and

good workes must needs follow, where a true and sound faith is, yet notwithstanding they live securely in their sinnes, presuming of the grace and mercy of God, nothing fearing God and his judgement, when as notwithstanding it is certain, that God doth require the mortification of the old Adam, and good fruit of good trees. Although perhaps Paul speaketh not here properly of these, but of them which thinke and in vaine words teach, that fornication, covetousnesse, and such like are not sinnes, as the blind Heathen did, and many doe at this day under the name of Christians: yet is it to be feared, seeing they live no better then the Heathen doe, and be themselves fornicators and covetous persons, that they shall feelee the like vengeance of God with them, yea so much more grievous vengeance, as they doe know more certainly that those are sinnes, according to that saying Rom. 2. *Thinkest thou this, O thou man, that condemnest them which doe such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgement of God? after thine hardnesse, and heart that cannot repent, thou heapest unto thy self wrath against the day of wrath, and of the declaration of the iust judgement of God, &c.* Be not therefore companions with them: For ye were once darknesse, but are now light in the Lord: walke as children of light. So Peter also saith, that it is sufficient for us, that we have spent the time past of our life after the lust of the Gentiles, but from henceforth should have nothing common with them, but spend the rest of our life in the service and worship of God. When we were Gentiles, we knew not that these were sinnes, we were so blinded through incredulity and ignorance of God. But after that we were made light in the Lord, that is lightned by Christ, we do not only well understand what God is, and what he requireth of us, what sinne and iniquity is, but are also able now to be in stead of light unto others, and to teach them those things which we have learned. Such Paul said the *Philippians* were, that they shined as lights in the world in the midst of a naughty and crooked nation. So before we were not only darke, but darknesse it self, inasmuch as we were not only ignorant and erred, but did also bring other into the same darknes, both by words and deeds. Let us be thankfull therefore to him, which hath called us out of this darknes into his marvelous light, walking as the children of light, which Peter also admonisheth us to doe. For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodnesse, and righteousnesse, and truth. Forasmuch as he hath here spoken of light, it had been more agreeable to have added, for the fruit of light, as the Latin editions have, then of the Spirit, as it is read in the Greeke. Who knoweth whether the Greekes copies were here changed upon this occasion, for that Paul in the Epistle to the Galathians entreareth of the fruits of the Spirit: But this skillerh little, of the Spirit, and of light  
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are all one in this place. Goodnesse therefore is a fruit either of the Spirit or of light, contrary to covetousnesse, whereby a Christian man is good, that is, profitable and beneficiall to others, ready to gratifie and doe well to his neighbours. Righteousnesse being a fruit of the Spirit is contrarie to covetousnesse. For it maketh that no man doth take away from another that which is his, either by violence, either by craft or guile, but that he endeavour rather to give unto every man that which is his own. Truth is a fruit of the Spirit contrary to hypocrisie & lying, which requireth that a Christian be true and uncorrupt not only in words, but also in his whole life, that he doe not glory of the name of a Christian without workes, that he be not called a Christian, and yet live after the manner of the Heathen, in fornication, uncleannes, covetousnes, and other vices, &c. **The 27. Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, wherein is declared how God careth and provideth for them that be his.** *Luke 9. verse 1. to the 11.*

*Then it came to passe, as the people pressed upon him to heare, &c.*  
**T**O them that beleeve this text is most easie to be understood, which setteth forth two things unto us, namely faith, and temporall good things. First it declareth unto them that beleeve in Christ, that they shall have sufficient wherewith to sustaine themselves even in this life: which Christ sheweth by this, when he giveth so many fishes to Peter and his companions, as they durst not so much as desire. So that Christ is carefull even how to feed the bellie, if that cursed incredulitie be not an hindrance thereunto. For behold *St. Peter*, and consider his heart aright in your mind, then shall ye find, that he did not so much as thinke, that he should take so many fishes. God therefore is present, and causes fishes to come into the net, even more then they would have wished. By which example we are admonished that they shall have sufficient of those things that are necessary for the sustentation of this life, which doe beleeve, but they that doe not beleeve can never be satisfied, whereby they fall into all kind of vices. Hereunto pertaineth that which *S. Paul* saith *1 Tim. 6.* *Godlines is great gain; if a man be content with what he hath. For we brought nothing into the world and it is certain, that we may carrie nothing out, therefore when we have food and rayment, let us therewith be content. For they that will be rich, fall into temptation and snares, and into many foolish and noysome lusts, which drown men in perdition and destruction. For the desire of money is the root of all evill, which while some lusted after, they erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrowes.* This placeot *Saint Paul* plainly declarerh what followeth our unbelieve, to wite, that it travellet to get substance, and labourerh to be rich, and falleth into the temptation and snares of the Devill. But we cannot see that, forasmuch as it is spirituall:

If we could as well see the hurt, which it bringeth to spirituall things, as we can see that which it bringeth to corporall and outward things, then were it an easie matter to preach unto us. For we see plainly in outward things, how he that is given to the desire of money, scrapeth and gathereth together, doth iniurie to all men, that he alone may gather together, and heap up many things, whereunto he may trust and say: Well, now have I goods enough. Whereby we may gather how unkind and unmercifull a covetous man is: for he doth good to no man, he sheweth himself gentle and kind to no man, he giveth nothing to any man, but looketh unto his own lucre and commoditie.

Now this is a cursed thing, that we cannot so much as trust unto the Lord, that he will feed our belly, thinking alwayes, that we shall perishe with hunger, when as notwithstanding we shall have things necessary and that which is sufficient for us, as Christ saith Matth. 6. *I say unto you, be not carefull for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drinke, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more worth then meat? and the body then rayment? Behold the fowles of the ayre: for they sow not, neit her reap, nor carrie into the barnes: yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better then they? Which of you by taking care, is able to add one cubit unto his stature? And why care ye for rayment? Learne how the lillies of the field do grow: they are not wearied, neit her spinne: yet I say unto you, that even Salomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore if God so cloath the grasse of the field, which though it stand to day is to morrow cast into the oven, shall he not doe much more unto you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying: what shall we eat? or what shall we drinke? or wherewith shall we be cloathed? (For after all these things seek the Gentiles: ) For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things: But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be ministred unto you. Care not then for the morrow: for the morrow shall care for it self: the day hath enough with his own griefe. Ye see in this place, how God hath a care for the fowles and flowers, and doth adorn them after a most goodly sort: how much more will God give unto us those things that be necessary? and yet we cannot put our trust in him, that so the Devill entangled us in his snares. When one commeth so far, that he is not content with that he hath, neither trusteth in God, then charitie must needs suddenly cease, so that he doth good to no man, but only provideth that his own heap be increased. Hereupon came the spirituall state of sacrificing Priests, and Monkes, that they might only help themselves, feed their belly, avoid labour, enter into Monasteries, that thereof did arise a true proverb: Desperation maketh a Monke, yea not only a monke, but sacrificing Priests, Bishops and Popes:*

Popes: for they trust not in God, that he is able to feed them, but they study upon this only, that they may be delivered from all miserie and infirmities, which is altogether to live in incredulitie: they never trusted in God, that he is able to give them nourishment and things necessarie, if any of them should marrie a wife and remaine without that state of Antichrist. Moreover here is an example set forth unto us, which provoketh and allureth us to confidence, and first that wee commit our belly to God: for he hath a care of us, even in temporall things. Which sufficiently appeareth in Peter, whereas he took such a great multitude of fishes, which ranne by great companies into his nets. Whereby it plainly signified that God will forsake no man, but that every one shall have enough, if that we shall only trust in him, as the 37. Psalm affirmeth: *I have been young, and now am old, and yet saw I never the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.* Things necessarie shall not be wanting unto us, if faith be not wanting: for before we should want, the very Angels should come, and minister unto us food. Whereas therefore men are commonly oppressed with so great miserie, only unbelieve is the cause thereof. And albeit God be with us, notwithstanding he requireth yet of us, work or labour, and hope, if he at any time differ somewhat to help us. He commandeth Peter here, that for the taking of fishes, he should cast forth his nets: *Launch out into the deep,* saith he, *and let down your nets to make a draught,* as if the Lord said: Do thou that which belongeth to a fisher, cast thy net into the deep, and commit the successe unto me, leave the care unto me. God leaveth not the care unto thee, but the work and labour: howbeit we after a cleane contrary order, studie to commit the care to our selves and the labour to him. Whereby it cometh to passe, that every one for himself applyeth his mind earnestly to gaine, and to gather money unto himself, that he may not be enforced by any meanes to take paines and labour. But if thou wilt live a Christian life, leave unto thy God to care how the fishes shall come into the nets, and goe thou, and take upon thee the state wherein thou mayest labour. Howbeit for the most part, we wish such states of life, as in which there is no need of labour, which is altogether a devillish thing. And therefore have we been consecrated Monkes and sacrificing Priests, that we might live only like gentlemen, without labour. And for the same cause parents have set their children to school, that at the last they might live merrie days, and to serve God, as they thought. Whereby it came to passe that they did not know, what a good life was: forasmuch as God especially commendeth that, and that indeed is acceptable unto him, which is gotten with the sweat of the browes, as he commanded Adam. *Genesis 3. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.* And the deeper thou art occupied in the



the law, in so much better case thy things are, wherefore follow thy worke, labour, and trust in God, all carefulness being cast off. Now some murmur, and say, it saith be preached, that we must trust in God, and leave the care unto him, I might long enough, say they, believe or trust, before I should have wherewithall to be fed and sustained, if I should not labour. Yea it is plaine enough that thou must labour, forasmuch as labour is commanded thee: Howbeit suffer God to care for thee, believe thou, and labour, then shalt thou assuredly have those things that be necessary for the sustentation of thy life. And this is an other thing, that we must hope notwithstanding, though God differeth for a time. Therefore he suffereth them to labour all the night, and to take nothing, and sheweth himself to be such a one, as will suffer them to perish with hunger. Which might have come in to the minde of *Peter*, when he had fished so long and taken nothing, so that he might have said: now God will suffer my Belly to perish with pining and famine. Howbeit he doth not so, but goeth on still in his labour, he plyeth his worke and hopeth that God at the last will give him fishes, albeit he differeth a time. God therefore is present, and giveth him so many fishes in one day, as he could scarce take in the space of eight dayes. Wherefore these things are to be learned well of thee, that thou labour and hope, although God differeth his blessing a little. For albeit he differeth a while, and suffereth thee to labour sore, so that thou now think thy labour to be lost, yet must thou not therefore despaire, but repose thy hope in him, trusting assuredly that he will at the last give thee prosperous successe. For he will certainly come and give more then thou didst need as he did here unto *S. Peter*. Wherefore if God delayeth with thee a little, think with thy selfe, he delayed also with *S. Peter*, and yet afterward gave unto him abundantly. Commit thy selfe therefore to his good will and pleasure, and leave not off thy worke, but hope still, and then shall not thy hope be frustrate. Thus much concerning the former part of the text, now let us heare the latter. After therefore that they had taken fishes, and tasted the fruit of faith, their faith is increased and augmented. Wee therefore must goe so farre, that we may commit our Belly to God: for he that cannot commit so much as his Belly to him, will never commit his soule unto him. Howbeit that is only a childish faith. Here we learn first to go by benches and settles: here we doe feede on milke as yet: but we must likewise learne by these to commit our soule also to God. The Evangelist so meaneth when he saith: Now when *Simon Peter* saw it, he fell down at *Iesus* knees, saying Lord, goe from me; for I am a sinfull man. For he was utterly astonished, and all that were with him, for the draught of fishes which they tooke. Let *Peter* be here a Type or figure of them which believe eternall good things, and count him as one verily looking for

and seeing the good things to come. A sinfull conscience is of that nature, that it so behaveth it self, as *Peter* here did, whereas he flieth his Saviour, and thinketh: Lord, I am more unworthy, then that I should be saved, and sit among thy Saints and Angells: for that good is most exceeding high. Here straight conscience is not able to comprehend such great good things, but it thus thinketh: If I were as *Peter* and *Paul*, I could easily believe: Which is altogether a foolish and vaine thing. For if thou wouldest place thy self according to thine own holines, thou shouldest build upon the Sand. Thou must not doe so but behave thy self like unto *Peter*, for in that he esteemed himself vile, and judged himself unworthy of so great grace, he rightly became worthy. And therefore, whereas, thou art a sinner, thou must trust in God, and dilate and open wide thy conscience and heart, that grace may enter in. After thou hast now knowne God, thou must relect none of his gifts, that is, when as thou seest the great good things, thou must not despaire. It is good that we know our selves, and the deeper we know our selves, so much the better. But that grace is not to be refused because of thy sinnes. For when thou shalt finde thy conscience to tremble so that it would drive away sinnes, then art thou most ready and most fit to receive grace, then shalt thou finde comfort in thy conscience, and say with *Micheas*: *Who is such a God as thou that pardonest wickednesse, and castest all our sins into the bottome of the Sea?* Mic 7. Whosoever take not away sinnes, they are no Gods but Idols: whereupon he saith rightly, that none is like unto our God. For other Gods will finde and not bring godlines, but the Almighty God doth not find it, but bring it: wherfore thou must not forthwith despaire, if thy conscience trembleth and feebleth sinne. For the more defiled that thou art, so much the sooner doth the Lord poure in his grace, if so be thou be repentant and thirstest after it. A great part goe so far, that they say that they merit grace, whiles they dispose themselves thereunto which is, as they interpret, whiles they doe that which lyeth in them, and also that they doe satisfie for their sinnes. But it is not so. The scripture teacheth us, that it is God that taketh away sinne, and casteth it into the bottome of the Sea. We shall not pur away sinnes by our workes, neither shall we be iustified of our selves. God himself, and none but he shall do the thing, of his meere grace as *Esaie* saith: *I am, even I am he only, that for mine own self sake do: take away thine offences, and forget thy sins. so that I will never thinke upon them more.* Isa 43. And so must thou believe, otherwise thou shalt never obtaine a joyfull conscience. Wherfore, when as *Peter* said. I am a sinner he said right. It is true indeed, there were causes, why he might be afraid of himself, and humble himself, but he ought not to refuse God, but most willingly receive him. Wherfore when thou shalt feele thy sinne, like

as *Peter* did, and shalt perceive that thou wouldest now fly from God, then it is need that thou doe forthwith turne thy self, and come more and more unto him. For if God should goe away, and would not take away sinne, would not come unto thee, nor seeke thee, yet the more thou perceivest thy self a sinner, the more hast thou oughtest to make unto him, which see thou marke well, and lay it up in a mindfull memory. For as *Saint Peter* doth here, so all consciences do, which are terrified of sinnes, and would flie from God, and seeke another God, doe not thou leave so, but come boldly, and joyn thy self nearer unto God. Otherwise if one goe away to seek workes, and help of another God, he is then found like the foolish Virgins, which while they goe to get themselves Oyle, are in the meane season shut out. But what doeth *Christ*, when *Peter* so humbleth himself? and by reason of his great feare and terrour, desireth the Lord to depart from him, did he leave him in such desperation of himself? No truly, but he comforteth him, saying thus: *Feare not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men.* This is a joyfull word, whereby weak hearts receive comfort. Now therefore that God hath a care for us, yea even in those things that pertaine to the Body, ye see by this, that he giveth *Peter* so many fishes: he maketh him also full and rich in spirit, that hee ought to bestow some of his plenty upon others. He maketh him a fisher both in Body and in spirit: in Body, for that he taketh many fishes which he may sell: but in spirit he is a fisher of men. For he hath the Gospel, whereby other men must be brought to God by him, and the Kingdom of *Christ* be increased. Loe, it cometh to passe, that where men believe, the Lord giveth so much, as succoureth and helpeth all men. The faithfull man outwardly helpeth the needy with his substance and goods: And from within he breaketh forth, teacheth other, and enricheth them also inwardly. For as such a man cannot hold his peace, but is inforced to declare and shew to others, how hee is dealt with, as it is in the 91. Psalm. *Make me a cleane heart O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy spirit from me. O give me the comfort of thy help againe, and stablish me with thy free spirit. Then shall I teach thy wayes unto the wicked, and sinners shall be converted unto thee.* And in an other Psalm also *David* saith: *I believed, and therefore will I speak.* Which is thus much in effect: when I believe, I know God, and tast of his goodnesse, then I consider the case of other men, and goe and declare such knowledge and goodnesse of God unto them. Wee see therefore in this text, how carefull God is for them that be his, and that he doth sustaine them both in Body and in Spirit. But if he doth sometime differre any thing, without all doubt it is through the fault of our incredulitie, or because we have now new begun to believe. For  
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where faith is new and little, there is some time small and slender help that wee may learne to know the Lord, and to trust in him. But when we have gone so farre that we trust strongly in God, then nothing can be wanting unto us, then God poureth upon us both Corporall and Spirituall good things, and so abundant treasures that we may be able to help others. This indeed is to enrich the poore and fill the hungry. Thus much shall suffice concerning this text.

**The 16. Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, concerning trust in God in penurie and distresse.** [*Mark. 8. verse 1. to the 9.*] *Verse 1. In those dayes, when there was a very great multitude, and had nothing to eate, &c.*

[ Hope dearly beloved, that ye doe well understand the meaning of this text. For your understanding is sufficiently well grounded in these mysteries, so that ye doe easily perceive what good is to be looked for in the Gospell, and what is prescribed unto us therein, namely the true nature and quality of faith. And this is the cause why Christ is of all the Evangelists set forth to be so loving and gentle: for although the doings and workes described of them doe oftentimes varie, neverthelesse the simplicitie of faith remaineth alwayes a like. Moreover this text doth so lively set forth Christ unto us in his colour, that it may be manifest and well knowne unto every one of us, what we ought to promise our selves concerning him, to wit: that he is mercifull, bountifull, gentle, who succoureth all that flie unto him for help. And such ought to be the image of faith. For the scripture seteth before us a double image: one of feare, which representeth to our eyes the horrible wrath of God, before which no man is able to stand, but rather we are all enforced to be cast downe in minde, when wee see it, unless we be strengthened by faith. Howbeit against this is set the other image namely of grace, which faith doth attentively behold, and taketh from hence principles of comfort, and conceiveth trust and confidence in the favour of God, having this hope, that man cannot promise to himself from God so many good things, but that he hath infinit more treasures in a readinesse for him. Ye have now often times heard, that there are two sorts of good things, spirituall and corporall. The Gospell by these temporall and corporall good things teacheth us the faith of Children, and they are unto the weak, as a certaine meane or helpe, whereby they may learne the goodnes of God, how bountifull he is in bestowing his riches upon us, and that wee ought in spirituall things also to put our hope and trust in him. For if we be now instructed by the Gospell, that God will give food to our belly, we may thereupon account with our selves, that he will nourish and cloath our soules with spirituall good things. If I cannot commit my body unto him that he may feed it, muchlesse can I commit my soul unto him that he may alwayes preserve it. Or if I cannot be brought to believe

believe, that a Crown of gold shall be given unto me of him, how I pray you, shall I hope for tenne Crownes of gold of him? From whom I dare not promise to my self so much as a peece of Bread, truly much lesse shall I be perswaded to believe, that he will give a Farme unto me or his whol inheritance. Now he that is not able to attain unto this tender, and as it were as yet sucking faith, to him surely it is very hard to believe, that God will pardon his sinnes, or preserve his soul forever. Forasmuch as we are perswaded, that the soule is by infinite degrees to be preferred before the belly, toward which notwithstanding he is touched with compassion as this our present text teacheth. Wherefore Saint Peter hath rightly admonished: *1. Pet. 2. Beloved Brethren, as new borne Babes desire that sincere milke of the word, that ye may grow thereby.* For it is not enough that the Infant being put to the Teat doe suck, but he must also waxe greater, and gather strength, that he may accustome himself to feed on bread and stronger meat. Now to eare milke is to tast of the favour and grace of God, which is then tasted of, when a tryall thereof is had in our life. For although I should preach a hundred yeares of the bountifulnes, favour, liberallity and gentlenes of God toward us, it would profite me nothing unlesse I have a tryall and tast of those commodities, neither could I learn rightly to trust in God thereby. Hereof also thou mayest conjecture how rare a Christian man is. There are many which say, that they commit their belly to God, but that sticketh only in the tongue & lipps when as rather it ought to pearce to the heart. Let us now consider an example teaching us the qualitie & nature of faith. The Apostle *Hebrewes 11.* hath written thus: *Faith is the ground of things which are hoped for, and the evidence of things which are not seen.* Which is thus much in effect: faith is the foundation, whereby I look for that good thing, which is neither seen with the eyes, nor heard with the eares, but which I must onely hope for. Even as in our present text it plainly appeareth: wherein we read that there were about foure thousand men, who together with their wives and children had now suffered hunger three dayes (was not this a notable kind of fasting?) yet were not famished with hunger, being farre from their houses, and destitute of those necessities, whereby the body is sustained. Now Paul saith that faith is a thing whereby a man hopeth for those things which appeare not to the eyes. Such a faith had this multitude, which although they see no meat, neverthelesse they trust in God, that he will feed them. What doth Christ here? he is moved with compassion, he demandeth of the Disciples with what victualls, or with what thing their hunger may be taken away. To whom his disciples answer: whence can a man satisfie such a multitude here  
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in the wilderness? Here you see how mans reason and faith agree together, that the wiser reason is, so much lesse can it submit it self to the workes of God. For this cause therefore did he ask his Disciples, that every one of them might trie their own reason, and learne how much the capacitie of man and faith do differ one from another.

Here it appeareth unto us how reason is blind, and how, when faith commeth, it ought to give place. Whereof let this be an example: If I were a married man, having a wife and a companie of children, and had nothing wherewith to nourish them, neither would any man give me any thing: yet should it be my dutie to beleve and hope, that God will provide for me. But when as I see my hope to be in vaine, and that I am not succoured by and by with nourishment and cloathing, then if I be faithlesse, I yeld unto desparations, and go and purpose another thing with my self, I apply my mind to dishonest trades, that I may get somewhat thereby, as theft, deceit, and other such practises, and by all meanes that I am able, I passe through the stormes of adversitie. See what filthie incredulity bringeth unto man. But if I be indued with faith, I shut mine eyes and say: Most gentle Father, I am thy creature, and thy worke, it cannot be denied but thou hast created me, I will put all my trust in thee, which hast greater care of my welfare then I my self. Thou wilt well nourish, feed, cloath, and help, where and when thou shalt know best. So faith is a sure foundation, whereunto I trusting, doe look for those things which I see not, and that I may speak at once, it shall not want those things that be necessarie. Surely the Angels themselves should come down from Heav'n, and give bread digged even out of the earth, unto such a faithfull man, that he might be nourished, rather then he should be pined with hunger, yea heaven and earth shall passe, before God will suffer a man endued with such faith to want either cloathing or any other necessarie things. This singular trust and confidence in God, the comfortable and effectuall word of the devine Promise doth require. Whereof David glorieth Psalme 37. *I have been young and now am old, and yet saw I never the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. And againe: God knoweth the dayes of the righteous, their inheritance shall continue for ever. They shall not be confounded in the perillous time, and in the dayes of death they shall have enough.* But if wee shall aske counsell of reason, it will forthwith say (as the Disciples did before) this thing is impossible: for it looketh for nothing, it trusteth to nothing, when nothing is present. Of like diffidence were the Disciples, who thought thus with themselves: how can it be that such a great multitude of men should be here refreshed with meat? truly it exceedeth our capacitie. If they had seen a heap of money,

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store of bread, and shambles full of flesh, they could then have easily releev'd this present necessitie, they could have put al in a good hope, and fitly have disposed all things, according to the capacitie of their reason. And thus much shall suffice to be spoken concerning the faith of tempotall good things : now we will intreat of spirituall good things, which shall come unto us when we shal dye. Then shall we see death set before our eyes, when as notwithstanding we would willingly live, then shall hell appeare unto us, when we rather desire for heaven, then shall we behold the judgement of God, notwithstanding his grace would be more acceptable unto us. In a summe, whatsoever wee would desire to see, shall be taken out of our sight, yea and no creature shall help us against death, hell, and the judgement of God. But if I beleave, I say thus unto my selfe : well, faith is a sure foundation : herewith I being stayed up, shall attaine unto those things which are very farre out of my sight, albeit those things be horrible which be in my sight, yet shall they not hurt him that beleeveth. Although therefore I doe presently see nothing, but death, hell, and the judgement of God, yet must I consider none of these, but rather my mind is to be confirmed with an undoubted trust, that God by the vertue of his promise, not in respect of my meritts or workes, will give unto me life, blessednesse, and grace. This indeed is to cleave unto God by sincere faith, which is here very well painted forth in this grosse and bodily image of foure thousand men, who cleaving to God only by faith, did not doubt that they should be refreshed of him. If they had judged according to the capacitie of their reason, they would have murmured, and said after this sort : surely we are a very great multitude, we are here in the wide Wildernesse, we have emptie and hungrie stomachs, here is nothing that is able to fill them. Howbeit they murmured of none of these things, but conceiving a sure confidence, reasoning nothing against God after the affection of men, they commend themselves wholly to the good will of God, and commit unto him this urgent necessitie of hunger, they themselves being quiet from all care. Then God, before this care commeth upon them, and before they begin to aske of him, is present, being more carefull for them, then they are for themselves, and saith on this sort : *I am moved with compassion toward the multitude : if I send them away fasting, it is a danger lest they faint by the way.* Behold how gentle and beautifull we have God toward us, who hath even a care to feed the uncleane belly. Here now our hope is erected, and the words of Christ are comfortable to a man, when he saith : They have now continued with me three dayes, it now becometh me to give sufficient unto them to eate. Here we may see, that all that doe stick diligently to the word of God, are fed of God himself. Wherefore let us dearly beloved, at the last begin

to beleeve, for only diffidence and incredulitie is the mother of all sine and vices, which at this day reigne in all sorts of men. How cometh it to passe, that every where, whithersoever we turn us, there are so many harlots and bauds, such plenty of deluders and deceivers, so many theeves, pillers, userers, robbers, Simonists, as they call them, and sellers of benefices. All these diffidence toward God bringeth forth unto us. For such kind of men doe judge only according to humane reason, and reason looketh unto that which is present: but that which it seeth not, it is not able to comprehend: wherefore while it doth not repose her trust by faith in God, it is enforced to despaire, which desperation afterward causeth such naughtie and wicked men. Behold thus it goeth out of frame with us, when we commit our selves to be ruled, not to faith, but to our own reason. Moreover, as ye have now learned faith, so must ye also learne love. For Christ is set forth unto us in a double forme, in one, of faith, that we should not be over carefull: in another, of love, that we may learne, that as he hath care of us, giving us meat, drink, apparell, and that of meer and bountifull love, not for his own commodities sake, or because of our meritts: so also we ought to doe well to our neighbour, and that freely, only love moving us thereunto, that as Christ is to us, so wee may be to our neighbour. Hereupon now we may perceive, that all workes of Monks and Nunnes are vaine and to be utterly disallowed, when they are not directed to that end, that they may serve their neighbour, but are ordained only unto this end, that they may meritt much at Gods hands by them. For the true workes of Christians, which they desire to be accepted of God, must be done so, that they tend to the profit of our neighbour, and not to this end, that we should thinke that we shall meritt many things of God by them, they must be cheerfully and freely bestowed upon all, even as Christ hath done, who hath spread abroad and freely bestowed his goodnes upon all. These things have I briefly spoken concerning this text, that yee may thereby learne, that God requireth this especially of us, that wee doe firmly and constantly trust in him, and that we freely doe good and be beneficiall to our neighbours, according as God hath of his meer goodnes and mercie bestowed infinite benefices and blessing upon us. The Prophet saith Psal. 50. *Hearc O my people and I will speak. I my self will testifie unto thee O Israel, I am the Lord, even thy Lord, I will not reprove thee, because of thy sacrifices, or for thy burnt offerings, for that they be not alway before me. I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor Goates out of thy folds, for all the beasts of the Forrest are mine, and so are the castell upon a thousand Hills. I know all the fowles upon the Mountaines: and the wild beasts of the Field are at my commandement. If I be hungry, I will not tell thee: for the whole world is*



mine, and all that is therein. Thinkest thou that I will eat Bulls flesh, and drink the blood of Goats? After the same sort he saith unto us: Behold *Israell*, that is, thou faithfull man, I am thy God, thou art not my God, I will give unto thee, thou givest nothing to me, I will not be angry with thee, for that thou offerest not many things unto me. For whatsoever is in thy stable, in thy houses, in thy court, it was all mine before, for I have sent it thither, Whereby he briefly reproverth the Jewes, who did marvelously please themselves in their sacrifices. Now because he rejecteth these sacrifices, what will he have to supply the place of them? truly even that which followeth in the same place: *Offer unto me praise, and thy vowes, call upon me in the time of trouble, and I will heare thee, and thou shalt glorifie me.* This is, I will have thine heart, give over thy self to me, and account me for a gentle, favourable, yea and for thy God, and it shall suffice me. Wherefore place thy faith, trust and hope in him, count him for a gentle and loving God, cleave unto him, and in extreame anguish flie unto him for succour, and to none beside him. Beleeve and look for help of him, that he will help thee, thou needest not any whit doubt. Afterward doe good to thy neighbour with a cheerfull heart and freely. These two things are set forth in this our text, as also in many other places beside. **The 27. Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, wherein is declared how grievously God punisheth the contemners of his word** [*Luk. 19. verse 44 to the 48.*] And when he was come neare to Ierusalem, he beheld the city and wept over it, &c.

**T**He sum and scope of this text is this: The Lord is troubled and lamenteth for the evils which were to come upon the contemners of the word of God. Ye have oftentimes heard, what the word of God is, what is the fruit and commoditie thereof, also what Disciples it hath, of which nothing is here done, or said: but the punishment and miserie only is shewed, which was to come upon the Jewes, for that they knew not the time of their visitation. Which thing let us well consider of, for it pertaineth unto us also. If they be punished which know not the time of their visitation, what shall come unto them, which persecute, blaspheme and reprehend the Gospel and Word of God? howbeit he speaketh here only of them which know not the season of their visitation. The contemners of God are preached against after two sorts: first by threatnings, as Christ threatneth them *Mart. 11. Wo be to thee, Corazin: Wo be to thee Bethsaida: for if the great works which were done in you had been done in Tyrus and Sidon, they had repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, it shall be easier for Tyrus and Sidon at the day of iudgement, then for you. And thou Capernaum (which was his own citie, wherein chiefly he wrought miracles) which art lifted up unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell*

bell: for if the great workes which have been done in thee, had been done among them of Sodom, they had remained to this day. But I say unto you; that it shall be easier for them of the land of Sodom in the day of iudgment, then for you. These are the threatnings wherewith he terrifieth them, that they should not so neglect the word of God. The other way the Lord here sheweth when as he sheadeth teares, and is touched with pittie toward miserable and blind men, he doth not terrifie or threaten them, as being indurate and obstinate, but is rather wholly moved with love and taketh pittie in his enemies, and would willingly call them back, but that he could prevaile nothing with them, and the means which he used to reclaime them were in vaine. Before in *Mattheu*, whereas he sharply rebuketh them, he dealeth not by love, but by rigour, but here is pure love and pittie, as we shall afterwards see.

First, when he drew neare to the citie, some went before him, and some followed him, with great ioy singing and saying: *Hosanna the sonne of David*, they spread their garments in the way, they cut down branches from the trees, and strowed them in the way, and all things were done after a goodly manner, but in the midst of this joy, Christ beginneth greatly to weep, he suffereth all to reioyce, notwithstanding his eyes gushed out with teares, when he beheld the citie, and saide: *If thou hadst even known at the least in this thy day those things which belong unto thy peace, thou wouldest take heed: but now are they hid from thine eyes.* As if the Lord should say: O, if thou knewest what belongeth unto thy peace that thou mightest not be destroyed, but stand still, thou wouldest yet at this day consider of it and beware. Now it were time for thee to know that which should be best for thee, but thou art blind, and wilt neglect the time, then shall there be no place neither for help nor counsell. As if he said: thou standest here adorned with sumptuous and goodly buildings, and there are in thee mightie citizens, which are both secure and merrie, thinking that no danger hangerh over them, but after the space of fortie yeares thou shalt be destroyed. Which the Lord plainly foretelleth in these words.

*The dayes shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall make thee even with the ground, and thy children which are in thee, and they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone, because thou knewest not the season of thy visitation.* Now the Lewes, as they supposed, stood unmoveable and safe, resting upon the promise of God, so that they thought no otherwise, but that they should perseverantly continue so for ever, they were secure and thought thus with themselves: God will not send such things unto us: we have the temple, wherein God himself is resident. We have also plentie of excellent men, money, and other things, Goe to then, who can doe any hurt or harme to us

Moreover the Emperour and people of Rome having taken the citie, seeing it furnished with so many and so great munitions and goodly and excellent buildings, marvelled greatly, and confessed, that it was impossible that so great a city should be taken, unless it had been the speciall will of God. Their boasting therefore, and confidence in their owne false opinion deceived them. Howbeit the Lord did more earnestly and deeply consider the matter then they, when he said: O Ierusalem, if thou knewest those things that are known to me, thou wouldest have a care of thy peace (peace in the Scriptures is, when the matters and affaires of any have good successe) thou thinkest that thou hast glad and merrie daies, that it is well with thee, and that thy affaires are in a prosperous state; but if thou knewest how thine enemies shall by siege afflikt thee, keep thee in on every side, and bring thee into such distresse, that they shall make thee even with the ground, destroy all thy buildings, and leave not a stone upon a stone, thou wouldest surely conveniently receive the word, whereby thou mightest enjoy both true peace, and all good things. The reading of the history of the destruction of this citie doth make much to the right understanding of this text. God had plainly so ordained, that at the feast of *Easter*, at which time they came to Ierusalem out of all quarters, the citie should be besieged, and there were then gathered together, as *Iosephus* reporteth, about thirtie hundred thousand men, upon whom the Lord would shew his grievous indignation and wrath. All the Apostles and Christians were departed and gone into the Country of *Herod*, not far from Ierusalem. The Lord took out the wheat, and put the chaffe together on an heap, now there was so great a multitude of people, that they might seeme to exceed not only a citie, but even a kingdom. And they were driven into so great calamitie, that all their victualls were spent, and none at all left unto them, so that they were constrained to eate the strings of their bowes, and old shoes, dressing them in such manner as they could, yea through the exceeding famine, they were driven to kill their own children: the Soldiers took the flesh of children roasted from the mothers, smelling the savour of the roasted flesh: two streets of Pidgeons dung was unto them instead of salt, & was also very dear: finally, there was so great miserie, so great slaughter, and shedding of blood, that it would not have been mervell for a stone to have been moved with pittie. He that had seen it, would have thought that God could not have been so grievously angrie, and so greatly have afflikt a people. Both houses and streets were filled with carcases dead through famine. Notwithstanding the Jewes remained still so obstinate and without understanding, that they gloried of God, and would not yeeld themselves untill the Emperour set upon them with his whole power, and took the citie, which they were able

to keep no longer. And when as some of them were so craftie, that they deuoured gold that it might not be taken from them, the Roman Soldiers thought that they had also so done, whereupon they slew about two thousand; and having ripe their bellies fought for gold. There was such a slaughter and murthering made, that it seemed a miserable thing even to the Gentiles, wherefore *Cesar* commanded that they should not be so slaine, but led captive and sold. The Iewes were then sold so cheap, that thirty were bought for a penny, they were then dispersed through the whole world, and were counted the most abject people of all other, as also at this day they are the most contemptible nation in the earth. For they live spread here and there, without cities and countries of their own, neither can they be againe gathered into one place, so that they shall never be able any more to erect their Priesthood and Kingdom, as they hope they shall. Thus God reuenged the death of Christ, and all the Prophets, thus were they recompensed for that they knew not the time of their visitation. Wherefore let us be here admonished, for it belongeth not only unto us, but even unto all *Germanie*. It is no jesting matter or sport, neither is there any cause why we should perswade our selves that it will fall out otherwise with us. The Iewes would not beleeve that euill should come upon them untill they had sufficiently tried it. And we at this day are visited by the benefit of God: he hath opened unto us a treasure, his sacred and holy Gospel, whereby we know his will, and see how much we were subiect to the power of Satan: but no man will receive this Gospel, yet we contemne it, and that which is more miserable, wee persecute and blaspheme it. God is patient: it pleaseth him to trie us a while: if we be not watchfull, so that the word be againe taken from us, the same wrath and indignation which was powred forth upon the Iewes, shall also be powred forth upon us. For there is the same Word, the same God, the same Christ at this day, that there was at that time, whereupon undoubtedly the punishment shall be the same, or at the least as grievous both in soule and body. We make almost a sport and trifling matter of the Gospel. For no man embraceth it from his heart, no man frameth his mannors according unto it. Which is a manifest argument of blindness. O thing surely most miserable! I feare lest the matter will shortly come to that passe, that all *Germanie* will fall together upon an heap, which (alas) in part of the commonitie hath already had a lamentable beginning, we have lost a great multitude of people, almost an hundred thousand men have been slain only between the feast of *Easter* and *Whitsontide*. It is a hard worke of God, and I feare me the warre begun is not yet at an end, this is only a forewarning and threatening whereby God would terrifie us, that we might diligently take heed to our selves: it was nothing but this

Foxes tayle, if he come again with his whip, he will scourge us more grievously. But we will behave our selves as the Jewes behaved themselves, untill there shall be place for no succour nor helpe. Now wee might prevent it, now were the time to know what should be best for us, and to receive the Gospel with peace, for at this day grace is offered unto us, whereby we may live peaceably, but we suffer day to passe after day, yeare after yeare, applying our selves lesse to the Gospel then before. No man doth now pray unto God for the increase of his word, no man receiveth it in his heart. If so be that the time shall passe, no prayers shall any more help. We weigh not this matter in our hearts, we think our selves safe, we doe not thoroughly perceive the great miserie already come to passe, neither doe we consider in our minds, how miserably God punisheth us with false Prophets and sects, which hee on every side sendeth unto us, which preach so securely, as if they had wholly received into their breast the spirit the comforter. Those which we counted best of all doe go away, and bring men into such a perplexitie, that they almost know not either what is to be done or not to be done. But this is only the beginning, albeit sufficient horrible and cruell. For there cannot be greater affliction and miserie, then if the Lord send amongst us Sects and false Prophets, which are so rash and bold, that it is greatly to be lamented. Notwithstanding the time of grace is now present: Christ hath been sent down into the world, hath been born man, hath served us, died for us, is risen again from the dead, hath sent unto us the spirit the comforter, hath given unto us his word, hath opened heaven so wide, that all good things may be obtained of us, moreover hath given unto us rich promises, whereby he promiseth that he will preserve us both in this short and fraile time, and in the eternall time, in this life, and in the life to come, most plentifully pouring forth his grace upon us. Wherefore the time of grace is now before our doores, but we dispise and neglect it, which God neither will, neither can pardon. For when as we contemne his word he threatneth punishment, and will at the last punish us, although he should defer it even an hundred years, but he will not defer it so long. And the more purely that the word is preached, so much greater shall the punishment be. But I feare greatly lest this punishment require the subversion of all *Germanie*. God grant that in this thing I be a false Prophet, but I feare exceedingly that it will come so passe, God cannot leave this wickednesse unrevenge, neither will hee deferre long, for the Gospel is so abundantly preached, that it was not so manifest even in the Apostles time as it is at this day, thanks be to Christ therefore. Wherefore I feare much, lest that all *Germanie* be spoyled, yea and quite destroyed, unlesse we otherwise apply our selves to this matter. We which have long heard the Gospel, ought to pray God

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from the heart, that he would give us longer peace. The Princes goe about to bring all things to passe by the sword, whereby they goe too rashly and rigorously to worke. Wherefore it is exceeding needfull, that we should pray unto God, that his Gospel may spread farther abroad through *Germany*, even unto them which have not yet heard it. For if punishment come suddenly upon us, our case shall be miserable, then many soules shall be in danger to be lost before the word shall come unto them. I would with therefore, that we would not so cruelly despise the Gospel, that precious treasure, not only for our own sake, but also for their sakes which are yet to heare it. A scourge is a little begun: God grant that it may so stay, that neither the Princes nor the Commonaltie be stirred up to greater rage and furie. For if that civill war should begin againe, it were to be feared that it would have none end. We doe like as the Jewes did, who had a greater care of the belly then of God, having more regard how to fill the belly, then that they might be saved, wherefore they lost both, and that worthily. For, forasmuch as they would not receive life, God sent unto them death, so they lost both body and soule. They pretended the same cause that we do. We would willingly indeed embrace the Gospel, if there were no danger of body and goods, wife, and children. If we shall beleve him, said the Jewes, the Romans will come, and take away both our place and the nation, which nevertheless came unto them: for that which the wicked man feareth, falleth upon him. This was a let and hinderance to the Jewes, that they would not beleve the words of God, neither have regard to the rich and large promises that he had made unto them. So also doe we, we regard not the mighty and comfortable promises which Christ hath made unto us, as where he saith: *He shall receive an hundred fold more, and shall inherit everlasting life.* Mat. 19. 29. Leave thy wife and children, I will preserve them, I will restore them, so as thou goest to worke boldly in my name. Thinkest thou that I cannot build thee other houses? couldest thou be so simple, who will give unto thee heaven? wilt thou not put thy self into danger for my sake? if thy goods be taken from thee, heaven and earth are mine, I will recompence thee abundantly. These and such like sayings we passe over, yea and also contemne, having diligent consideration only what we have laid up in our chests, and that our purse may be full, neither doe we see, that even that which we have, God hath given unto us, and will as yet give us more, if we beleve and trust in him, neither doe we mark if that we lose God we shall lose the belly also. How be it they that beleve in God, doe not avoid perill if it come for his sake, but commit all things to his divine power, that he may order them according to his will, and thus they think: The Lord hath given me both a house and the furniture therof, wife, children, &c.

ON DOMINICUS THE FIRST OF JULY. 1544. I have

I have not obtained them of my self, for as much then as they are Gods, I will commit them unto him, he shall best preserve them. For even otherwise I must leave them, wherefore I will refuse to suffer no perill, and to leave whatsoever I have for his sake, if the case so require. If he will have me so to doe, he can give me other things, for he hath promised that he will give sufficient to them that beleeve, both here and in the time to come. If he will not have me to live here, I owe death unto him, when he shall require me, I will be ready for his words sake. He that shall not doe thus, denyeth God, and is notwithstanding compelled to lose both this fraile life, and eternall life. The sinking belly which we make our god, is the cause that we doe not cleave to the word of God: for I will first be certaine how I may feed my self, and where my goods be. The Gospel saith, Trust in God, but I provide for my belly, and if I have one noble in gold, I thinke I have sufficient to sustaine and nourish me for ten dayes, and trusting to that which I have laid up, I trust not in God, that as he hath hitherto fed me, so he will nourish me still. Is not this a detestible thing, that I trust to one peece of coyne only, whereby I look to have my food and sustenance to morrow? Fye, what a cursed thing is such care for the belly? Shall a vile peece of coyne be more esteemed of me, then God himself, in whose power are heaven and earth, who giveth unto us aire and water, maketh grain to grow unto us, and sendeth all things necessary? It is more detestible then that it can be expressed by the voice of man, that God is not esteemed of us so much as a little money. Why dost thou not think: God who hath made me will well nourish me, if he will have me live. If he will not, well, then shall I have no need. But saith the belly, I find no god in my chest. Thou foolish man, who can assure thee that thou shalt live till to morrow? It is uncertaine whether thou shalt keep thy belly till to morrow, and desirest thou to know where food and sustenance is? If this did pearse our hearts, we should see how devilish a thing incredulitie is. Is it not a horrible thing that I doe not make so great account of God, who feedeth so many mouths, as to trust in him, that he will nourish mee, yea that I doe make more account of one noble in gold then of God himself, who poureth forth his good things so abundantly? The world is full of the blessings and works of God, he is on every side with his good things, notwithstanding we doe not yet commit our selves to him, or receive his visitation. O cursed world, which cannot trust to God even one day, and yet trusteth to a peece of Gold. That wee see, as I thinke, of what sort the world is, how it despiseth God for the bellies sake, which notwithstanding it is compelled to lose. O how great contemners of salvation are we? we ought rather to detest the world, but we are deeply drowned in old Adam. The word is **all** was a figure of hell, yea a very devilish kingdom, and an entrance to hell



hell. Wherefore Christ with weeping eyes exhorteth us to know our salvation, and to receive his visitation, lest that a plague and scourge follow, which undoubtedly shall come upon them, which thinking themselves in safety, doe not beleeve and trust in God. God give us his grace, whereby we may know him. It followeth moreover in the text. *He went also into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought; saying unto them, it is written, Mine house is the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.* This is the second part of this text, wherein is declared how the Lord going into the temple, beginneth to drive out the buyers and sellers therein. The former part was nothing else but an exhortation and inviting to faith, but here the Lord insinuateth what the temple of God is, and bringeth a place out of the scripture hereunto appertaining, namely out of *Isai*, where he saith: *Mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all people.* This is a strong saying, whereas the Prophet saith, for all people against the Jewes; who trusting unto that temple at Jerusalem, thought that this house made with hand, should continue for ever, supposing it to be impossible; that God would either destroy this temple, or leave the title desolate, because the word of God cannot lye. Wherefore they stoned *Stephen*, for that he speak against that holy stie, and affirmed that *Iesus* would destroy it, and change the ceremonies given of *Moses*. For they said: The Prophets have greatly praised this house: and doe you Apostles preach that it shall be destroyed? Howbeit this sayings thus to be understood, that the wisie Jerusalem, the Temple, and the People should continue untill the time of Christ, whereunto all the Prophets reld, which referred all things unto Christ, that as he should doe, so it should be, and so it should continue. Wherefore the place of *Isai* extendeth no further then to the coming of Christ, which all the Prophets also witness, affirming that there should come a kingdom, which should extend far and wide over the whole world; as it is in *Matt* 13. 35. *From the rising of the sunne unto the going down of the same, my name is great among the Gentiles; and in every place where I shall be offered to my name, they shall offer sacrifices: for my name is great among the Jewes. Hearken, O ye that love the word of the Lord.* Here the Prophet speaketh of the spirituall kingdom of Christ, who would build upon himself an house of prayer in the whole world; yet he saith, that God himself did continue and sanctifie the temple at Jerusalem, not because it was furnished with precious stones and goodly buildings, or hallowed of the Priests, which manner of rites and ceremonies use at this day, but because he had consecrated and hallowed it with his word, when he said: *This house is my house:* for his word was preached in it. Wherefore the word of God is preached, there is his true house, where the word of God hath his consi-

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and proceeding, these undoubtedly: God dwelleth with his graces where his Gospel is, there is the holy house of prayer, there prayers both may and ought to be made unto God. God also will heare us, as Christ saith Iohn 16. *Whatsoever ye shall aske the Father in my name, he will give it you: hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: aske, and ye shall receive.* Contrarywise, where the word is not, there is Satan wholly. Now, whereas we imitating the Jewes have builded so many temples, it were tollerable, if we had theretofore done that the word of God might be preached in them, for where Gods word is preached, there is his presence, and poureth forth his grace. Christ saith moreover that the Jewes have made the temple at Ierusalem a denne of theeves: But they were resident in the temple, which sold oxen and sheep, that they which came might buy to offer and worship God: Why therefore doth he call it a den of theeves? Surely he giveth unto it a foule name, which came to passe upon this occasion: for that it was not any more counted of them for the house of God, but for a house of merchandice, that is, the Priests had no care how the word of God was preached there, and did negligently and carelessly sing, bable, and read *Moses* and the Prophets. But God doth nothing of them that mumbling up of many words, which is only wine and childish. They behaved themselves like as our sacrificing Priests and Monks do, who of temples and monasteries making dens of theeves, preach paysonfull doctrine, and therefore only they celebrate Masse, that they may thereby get unto themselves money, and fill the holly, killing and destroying silly sheep with their traditions. Which is the denne, wherein soules are flaine, which ziels is to be given to all temples, wherein the word of God is not preached. For there they smock God, kill soules, expell the true word, and set up theevrie. O how foully have we been deceived in this point! But God at this day is highly to be praised, that his word reneweth and quickeneth us, driveth away theeves, and teacheth us to pray aright. For a sincere Christian must pray not in mouth only, but in heart also. Thus we have the second part of our text, now Christ casteth out the sellers, that is, that they served the belly, and maketh place for his word. It were very good if Monasteries were scouted after this sort, that either Christian schools, or places wherein the word of God might be preached, might be made of them: which if it come not to passe, they are, and do remain dens of theeves. If Christ calleth his house a den of theeves, how much more shall our temples, which God hath not consecrated, be proved to be dens of theeves? I have often times desired you, that ye would devoutly pray unto God that he turning away his indignation, would bridle the devill, who now rageth in the world. For ye have heard of a great calamitie, how many thousands have been slain, it is to be feared that they

they are all damned. God requireth obedience of us, and he hath pronounced the sentence, that he that taketh the sword, shall perish with the sword. They were besieged of Satan, who knoweth whether the same shall come untous? Let us pray God therefore that his kingdom may come untous, that Christians may be multiplied, and that hee will send wise and meeke Preachers, whom the people may receive and obey, Let him that knoweth the gift of God, pray for others which have not yet heard the word of God. For it is high time so to doe.

**The 28. Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, wherein is instructed of the Law and the Gospel, and of the difference between them.**

[ Luke 10. verse 23. to the 37 ] And he turned to his Disciples, &c.

Hope well that ye do now rightly understand this Gospel, forasmuch as it is preached of every yeare: notwithstanding, because occasion is now againe offered, we must againe intreat and preach of it. First the Evangelist saith, that Christ took his Disciples aside, and said unto them secretly after this sort: *Blessed are the eyes which see those things which ye see, and have not seen them, and to heare those things which ye heare, and have not heard them.* To see and heare is to be understood here simply of the outward seeing and hearing, to wit, that they saw Christ come in the flesh, heard his sermons, and were present at those miracles which he did among the Jewes. The Jewes saw the same according to the flesh, yea and felt them also: yet did they not truly acknowledge him for Christ, as the Apostles did, and especially Peter in the name of all the rest did confesse him, saying: *Thou art Christ the Sonne of the living God.* We grant indeed, that there were some among the Jewes, which acknowledged him, as the Apostles did, but the number of them was very small, wherefore he taketh his Apostles here severally unto himself. Many Prophets and Kings have seen Christ, howbeit in the spirit, as the Lord himselfe saith to the Jewes of Abraham, Joh. 8. *Your Father Abraham rejoyced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad.* The Jewes thought then that he had spoken of the bodily seeing, but he spake of the spirituall seeing, whereby all Christian hearts did behold him, before he was born. For if Abraham saw him, undoubtedly many other of the Prophets, in whom the holy Ghost was, saw him also. And although this seeing saved the holy Fathers and Prophets, yet did they alwayes with most inward and heartie affection desire to see Christ in the flesh also, as is commonly shewed in the Prophets. Wherefore the Lord saith here unto his Disciples, which saw him both in the flesh, and in the spirit: *Blessed are the eyes which see those things that you see.* As it is said: Now is the acceptable yeare and time of grace: The matter which is now in hand is so weighty and precious, that the eyes are worthily

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said to be blessed, which see it. For now was the Gospel preached openly, and manifestly both by Christ himself, and also by his Apostles, whereupon he here calleth them all blessed, which see & hear such grace. Of which grace I have preached much & a long time to you, I would to God yee did keep that which I have spoken thereof, fresh in memorie.

When the Lord spake these things, a certain Lawyer starr up, shewing himself as though he had been something, who tempting the Lord saith: *Master, what shall I doe to inherit eternall life?* This Lawyer was endued with wisdom, and not unskillfull of the Scriptures, which even his answer doth declare, yet in this place he is proved a foole, yea he is brought unto shame and ignomie. For Christ taketh away all his glorying even in one word. He was of this minde, that he had observed the whole law, and that he was a certaine chief one in respect of other, as undoubtedly he was, and thought himself sufficient worthy by reason of his godlines and learning to be conversant with the Lord. But what doth the Lord in this case? the text following declareth. *And he said unto him, what is written in the Law how readest thou?* And he answered and said: *Thou shalt love thy Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soule, and with all thy strength and with all thy minde, and thy Neighbour as thy self.* Then he said unto him. *Thou hast answered right: doe this, and thou shalt live.* Men thinke that this Lord gave this good man a hard lesson: he dealeth very straightly with him, it may seeme to some that he should have spared him a little, he putteth him to shame openly before all: he proveth that he had done nothing, who notwithstanding thought that he had done all things. He asked what he should doe: but I thinke he had enough and overmuch to doe, if he had been able to doe more then he was. If I had time, many things might be spoken of the two commandements. For they are the chief and greatest commandements in *Moses*, on which the whole law, and all Prophets doe hang, as Christ himselfe saith in *Matthew*, *Matth. 23. 40.* Notwithstanding we will entreat somewhat of them. If we consider the commandements of *Moses*, they have respect altogether unto love. For this commandement: *Thou shalt have none other Gods in my sight*, we can no otherwise declare or interpret, then, *Thou shalt love God alone*, so *Moses* expoundeth in *Deuteronomie*, where he saith thus: *Deut. 6. 4. 5. Heare O Israel, the Lord our God is Lord only. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soule, and with all thy might.* From whence the Lawyer took his answer. But the Jews understood this commandement so, that they thinke it to extend no farther, then that they should not set up, nor worship Idols. And if they can say and witness in mouth, that they have one God only, and doe worship none but him, they thinke they have observed this commandement. After the same sort did

this

this Lawyer understand it, but that was an evil and a wrong understanding thereof. Howbeit we must otherwise consider and understand this precept, *Thou shalt have none other Gods in my sight.* Thou, it saith, with all that thou art, but especially it requireth all thine heart, soule and strength. It speaketh not of the tongue, nor of the hand, nor of the knees, but of the whole man, whatsoever thou art, and hast. That no other God may be worshipped of me, it shall be necessary that I have the true and only God in my heart, that is, I must love him from mine heart, so that I doe alwayes depend on him, trust in him, repose my hope in him, have my pleasure, love and joy in him, and daily remember him. Even as otherwise, if we take pleasure of any thing, we say, it doth me good inwardly at the heart. And if any speaketh or laugheth, and doth it not in good earnest, neither from his heart: we are wont to say, Thou laughest indeed, but it cometh not from thy heart. The love of the heart in the Scriptures signifieth a vehement and speciall love, which we ought to beare toward God. They which serve God with mouth, hands, and knees only, are hypocrites, neither hath God any care of them. For God will not have part, but the whole. The Jewes did outwardly abstaine from Idolatrie, and served God alone in mouth, but their heart was far removed from him, being full of diffidence and unbelief. Outwardly they seemed to be very earnest in serving God, but within they were full of idolatry, whereupon the Lord said unto them. *Matth. 23, Wo be unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites, for ye are like unto painted sepulchers, which appeare beautiful outward, but are within full of dead mens bones, and of all filthines. So are ye also: For outwardlye appeare righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisie and iniquitie.* These are those wicked ones, which glory of the outward thing, which goe about to justifie and make themselves good by their owne workes, after the manner of this Lawyer. Consider how great the pride of this asse was, he cometh forth as though he could not be blamed, or rebuked of the Lord, he thought, yea it seemed unto him, that the Lord would here commend and praise his life before the people. He thought not to learne any thing of the Lord, but he sought only his owne commendation, he would willingly have had Christ set forth his prayse, toward whom the eyes of all were bent, and who was an admiration to all. So all Hypocrites do, outwardly they pretend excellent, great & weighty works: they say that they have respect neither of glory nor praise, but within in their heart they are full of ambition, & wish that their holines were known to the whole world, shewing a goodly signe of their religion, by the biting of their lippe, if they heare any speak thereof. But our Saviour Christ sheweth here no kindness or gentleness to this Lawyer, inasmuch as he putteth them to shame: that great holy man notwithstanding continueth still in the same mind

minde, and supposeth that he shall receive great honour, and singular praise because of his precious life, thinking that he had fulfilled the Commandement, whereupon also he looketh for a joyfull answer, that the Lord should say : Good Master, your Mastership hath done all things. But Christ answereth him : *Do this.* Which indeed is as much to say as : Thou art altogether a naughty Fellow, thou hast never in all thy life fulfilled so much as one Letter thereof, so shewing unto him how evill and naughty he was. Like unto this Lawyer are all they which doe most grievously offend against the first commandement, and thinke that God is to be loved, no more then the words sound for, & that therby it is fulfilled: the commandement therefore remaineth in their mouth, and doth as it were flote above the heart, and perfect it not : But I must goe much farther then so, I must love God so, that I can be content to forsake all Creatures for his sake, and if it shall seeme good unto him, my body and life, I must love him above all things, for he is jealous, and cannot suffer that any thing be loved above him, but under him he permiteth us to love any thing. Even as the Husband can suffer, that his wife love her Maides, the house, household things, chattell and such like, howbeit he suffereth her not to love any with that love wherewith she is bonnd unto him, but himself, yea he wil have her leave all such things for his sake. Again the wite requireth the same of her husband. After the same sort God can suffer that wee love his creatures, yea therefore they are created and are good. The sunne is a goodly creature, gold and silver, and whatsoever by nature is faire, procureth us to love it, which maketh it deare unto us, neither is God offended thereat. But that I should cleave unto the creature, and love it equally with him, that neither will he, neither can he suffer; yea he will have me both to deny and forsake all these things, when he requireth it of me, and will have me content, although I never see the sunne, money, riches, &c. The love of creatures must be far inferiour to the love which we must beare toward him. As he is the soveraigne good, so will he also be chiefly loved before all other good things, if he will not suffer that I shall love any thing equally with him, muchles will he suffer that I shall love any thing above him. Thou seest now I think, what it is to love God with all the heart, with all the soule, with all thy minde. To love God with all thy heart is, to love God above all Creatures, that is, although Creatures be very amiable and deare unto me, and that I take great delight in them, yet must I so love them, that I doe contemne and forsake them, when my God and Lord requireth that of me. To love God with all the soule, is to bestow our whole life and body at his pleasure, as if the love of creatures, or any temptation assaile thee, or would overcome thee, thou mayest say : I will rather part from all these then I will forsake

forfake my God, whether he call me of, either kill me, either drowne me, or whatsoever through his permission shall come unto me, I had rather leave all things then him, I will depend on that my Lord, rather then upon all creatures, or upon any other thing whatsoever it be. Whatsoever I have and am, I will bestow, but him will I not forsake, The soule in the scriptures signifieth the life of the Body, and whatsoever is done by the five senses, as to eate, to drinke, to sleep, to wake, to see, to heare, to smell, to tast, and whatsoever the soule worketh by the body, To love God with all the strength, is for Gods cause to renounce all the members and limbs of the body, so that one will offer to perrill whatsoever he is able in his flesh and body, before he will commit that which is against God. To love God with all the minde, is to enterprise nothing but that which may please God, whereby he understandeth the thought, which is in man, that that also be referred to God, and to all things that be exceptable unto him. Thou perceivest now what this commandement of God containeth in it. Thou shalt love God, Thou, Thou saith he, and that wholly, even every part of thee, not thy hands, nor thy mouth, nor thy knees alone. They which doe these things, as it is said, doe truly fulfill it : but no man liveth in the earth which doth so, yea we doe all otherwise. Wherefore the Law doth here make us all sinners, so that not so much as the least jot or point thereof is fulfilled of them that are most holy of all in the world. For no man doth so cleave with all his heart unto God, that he can leave all things for his sake. We (alas) are gone so farre, that we cannot suffer so much as a litle word, nay we will not forgoe the value of a half penny for Gods Cause. How can it be that we should love God, when his will is not setled in our minde? If I love God, I cannot but love his will also. Now if God send sickness, poverty, shame and ignomie, it is his will, whereat what we doe? wee murmur, we grudge, our minde is carried hither and thither, wee take most impatiently, and yet is this the least? What would we doe, if we should leave our Body and life for God and Christ his sake? then would we shew our selves after an other sort. But in the meane season we doe like unto this Pharisee and Lawyer, we lead a n honest life outwardly, we worship God, we serve him, we fast, we pray and behave our selves in outward appearance iustly and holily. But God doth not require that of us, but that we should bend our selves to do his wil with pleasure & love, cheerfully & lovingly. Wherefore whatsoever the Lord saith to the Lawyer, he saith it to al us, to wit, that we have yet done nothing, but that al things do yet remain to be done. All men therefore are guilty of death & subiect to Satan. Al men are lyars, vain, filthy, & whatsoever they pretend, it is nothing worth. We are wise in our own matters, that we may scrap together mony & goods, & we can

speake

peake most sweetly and fairely before men, and cunningly propound or set forth our matter. What doth God care for these things? He requireth of us that we love him with our whole heart, which no man living is able to performe, whereupon of this place is inserted, that we are all sinners, but especially they, whose life hath a goodly outward shew only. This is the former part of this text, namely, the preaching of the law: Now followeth the other part, which is the preaching of the Gospel which declareth how we may fulfill the law, and from whence that fulfilling is to be taken, which we shall learne of that Samaritane. What doth the Lawyer moreover, after that the Lord had thus dealt with him? He: saith the Evangelist, willing to iustifie himself, spake unto the Lord and asked him as followeth: *Who is then my neighbour?* He asked not? Who is my God? As if he said: I owe nothing unto God, neither doe I want any thing before God, yea it seemeth unto me, that I doe neither owe any thing to any man: nevertheless I would willingly know who is my neighbour. The Lord answering him, bringeth forth a most goodly similitude, wherby he declareth that we are all neighbours one to another, as well he that giveth a benefit, as he that receiveth and needeth one: although by the text it seemeth to appeare, that he only is a neighbour, which bestoweth a benefit upon another. But the Scripture maketh here no difference, sometime calling him our neighbour, which bestoweth a benefit, sometime him that receiveth a benefit. By this similitude the Lord inferreth in these words: *Goe and doe thou likewise*, so that that Lawyer had offended not only against God, but also against man, and wanted not only love towards God, but also love towards his neighbour, unto whom he had not done that good which he ought. This wretched fellow is brought into such a case that he is found wholly exill, even from the head to the feet. How came it to passe that he being most skilfull of the Scripture could not beware of this? So fell it out: he led a pharisaicall, hypocriticall, and counterfeit life, which had not regard unto his neighbour, and to succour and help others, but sought thereby only glory and honour before men, and so looked by negligent and dissolute living to come to heaven. But ye have heard very often, that a Christian life consisteth in this, that we deale with faith and the heart in things that pertaine unto God, but use our life and worke towards our neighbour, and that I must not look while my neighbour seeketh a benefit, and requireth some thing of me, but according to my duty must prevent his asking, and of mine own accord offer my liberalitie unto him. Now we will see what the parable containeth in it. The Samaritane in this place is without all doubt our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath declared his love toward God and men: Toward God, in that he descended from heaven, and was incarnate, and so

So fulfilled the will of his father: Toward men; for that by and by after baptism, he began to preach, to worke miracles, to heale the sick, neither was there any work that he did, which did concern himself only, but all his works were directed to his neighbour, being made our minister, when as notwithstanding he is above all, and equall to God: but he did all these things, for that he knew that they did please God, and that it was the wil of his father. When he had ascended to the high of the Commandement, that he loved God with all his heart, he set and committed the life of his body, and whatsoever he had to the pleasure and will of his father saying: Father, behold all things that I have, my life and soule are ready at thy will: I leave for thy sake the glory and honour which I have had among men, yea and all things how good soever they be, that the world may understand how greatly I love thee: My Father let for thy sake my wisdom be contemned, that the world may count me for the foolishhest of all: Now make I my self most contemptible of all other, who was before praised of the whole world: Now I am as a most wicked theefe, who before was liberrall, profitable, and beneficiall to the whole world: My Father, I make no account of all these things, that I may be found obedient to thy will. This is that Samaritane, who being desired by no prayers, came and fulfilled the Law with his whole heart, he alone hath fulfilled it, which praise none can take from him: he alone hath deserved it, and to him only it appertaineth. But whereas he is touched with care of the wounded man, hath compassion on him, bindeth up his wounds, bringeth him with him into an inn, provideth for him, that pertaineth unto us. The man which lieth half dead, wounded, beaten, and spoyled, is *adam*, yea and all we. The theefes which spoyled us, wounded us, and left us half dead, as yet a little panting, are the Devils. The horse and his siter doe here fall down, we are not able to help our selves: and if we should be left lying so, we should dye, through great anguish and distress, our wounds would become festered, and our affliction miserable and exceeding great. This excellent parable is set before our eyes, lively painting forth unto us what we are, what is the strength of our reason and free will. If that wretched man had gone about to help himself, his case would have been made worse, he would have hurt himself, he would have opened his wounds with rubbing, and so would have fallen into greater calamitie. Again if hee had been left lying, it had been all one. So it cometh to passe when we are left to our selves: our studies and endeavour surely are nothing, whomsoever we set upon the matter. Hitherto superfluous ways and divers meanes have been invented, whereby we might come unto heaven, and amend our life, this man found out this, another that, whereupon have increased innumerable sorts of Orders, letters of indulgences,



pilgrimages to Saints, which did alwayes make the State of Christian-  
tie worle. This is the world which is painted forth in this wounded  
man, he being wholly laden with sinnes, fainteth under so heauie a bur-  
den, and is not able to help himself. But the *Samaritan* who hath  
fulfilled the Law, and is perfectly sound and whole, commeth, and doeth  
more, then either the Priest or Levite, he bindeth up his wounds, pou-  
reth in oyle and wine, setteth him upon his owne Beast, bringeth him  
with him unto an Inne, maketh provision for him, and when he should  
depart, diligently commendeth him to the Host, and leaveth with him  
sufficient for expences, none of which either the Priest or Levite did.  
By the Priest the holy Fathers are signified, which flourished before  
*Moses*. The Levite is a representation of the Priesthood of the old Te-  
stament. Now all these could doe nothing by their works, but passed  
by like unto this Priest and Levite. Wherefore although I had all the  
good works of *Noah*, *Abraham*, yea and of all the faithfull Fathers, they  
would profit me nothing. The Priest and Levite saw that miserable  
man lie wounded, but they could not help him any thing: they saw  
him lye halfe dead, but what was that to the purpose? They could  
not give him any remedy. The holy Fathers saw men drowned and  
plunged in sinnes even up to the eares, they also felt the sting and an-  
guish of sinne, but what could they doe hereunto? they could make  
the case worse and not better. And those were the Preachers of the  
Law, which shew what the world is, namely that it is full of sinne, and  
lieth halfe dead, and cannot even any whit help it selfe with his  
strength, reason, and free will. But Christ is that true Samaritan, who  
is touched with as great care of that miserable man, as of himself. Nei-  
ther doth the Samaritan call him unto him, for he hath no meritt, but  
enjoyeth the meere grace and mercy of Christ, who bindeth up his  
woundes, and having great care of him, poureth in oyle and wine, that  
is, the whole Gospell. He poureth in oyle when grace is preached,  
when it is said: behold O miserable man this is thy incredulity, this  
is thy condemnation, thus art thou wounded and sick: but abide, I  
will shew thee a remedy for all this: Behold, joyne thy self unto this  
*Samaritan* Christ the Sayour, he will best help and succour thee, and  
beside him nothing. The nature of Oyle, as ye know, is to make soft  
and mollifie: so the sweet and gentle preaching of the Gospell mak-  
eth my heart soft and tender toward God and my Neighbour, so that  
I dare bestow my Body and life, for Christ and the Gospell, if God and  
need so require. Sharp Wine signifieth the holy Crosse of Af-  
fliction, which forthwith followeth. Neither is there any cause  
that a Christian should look farre about and seek the Crosse, for it  
sooner hangeth over his head then he is aware of, as *Paul* witnesseth,  
1 Tim. 3. All that will live godly in Christ Iesus, shall suffer persecu-  
sions.

tion. This is the cognisance and badg of this King. He that is ashamed of this cognisance, pertaineth not unto him. Moreover, that Samaritan putteth this wounded man upon his own beast: this is our Lord Jesus Christ, who beareth us, we lye upon his shoulders, upon his neck and body. There is scarce a more amiable and comfortable historie in the whole Gospel, then where Christ compareth himself to a shepherd, which carrieth againe the lost sheepe upon his shoulders unto the flock. The Inne is the state of Christianitie in this world, wherein we must abide for a little time. The Host is the ministers and preachers of the word of God, and of the Gospel, whose charge is to have care of us. This therefore is the summe: The kingdom of Christ is a kingdom of mercy and grace, where is nothing else but alwayes to be borne and to beare. Christ beareth our defects and infirmities, hee taketh our sinnes upon himself, and beareth our fall willingly, wee daily lie upon his neck, neither is he wearied with that bearing of us. It is the duty of the preachers of this kingdom, to comfort consciences, to handle them gently, to feed them with the Gospel, to beare the weak, to heale the sick: Moreover they ought fitly to apply the word according to the need of every one. This indeed is the duty of a true Bishop and Preacher, not to proceed by violence and injury, as it is the custome of our Bishops at this day, which vex, torment, and cry out; go to, go to, he that will not willingly, shall be compelled to doe it against his will. We must in no wise doe so. But a Bishop or Preacher ought to behave himself as a healer of the sick, who dealeth very tenderly with them, uttereth very loving words unto them, talketh very gently with them, and bestoweth all his endeavour about them. The same must a Bishop, or Minister of any particular Parish do, and think no otherwise, but that his Bishoprick or Parish is as an Hospitall, wherein are such as are combed with divers and sundrie kinds of diseases. If Christ be thus preached, then faith and love come together, which fulfill the commandement of love. Now forasmuch as the knowledge of the Law and the Gospel and of the difference between them is very necessary, I will intreat of them somewhat more at large.

[Of the Law and Gospel.] I have very often admonished your brotherly charity, that the whole Scripture divideth it self into two parts: into the Law, and the Gospel. The Law is that which teacheth what we must doe, what the will of God requireth of us. The Gospel teacheth where that is to be received, which the Law commandeth. Even as if I seek to take phylick, it is one Art to tell what the disease is, and another to minister that which is good & wholsome to remedie it. So standeth the case here: The Law revealeth the disease, the Gospel ministreth the medicine. Which is manifest even by the text wherof we have already intreated: the Lawyer cometh & being very

desirous of eternall life, asketh what he must doe. The Law declareth it unto him, saying: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soule, with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thy self. He that readeth these words after a bare and slender sort only, as this Lawyer did, understandeth them not. We must pearce into the Law, and every one behold his face and heart therein. God must be loved of me from the bottom of my heart: Again, I must love him with all my soule, that is, from the depth of my soule, so that I thoroughly feele in my self that I love him. For to love with the soule signifieth in the Scripture such love as a young man beareth toward a maid, which he feeleth thoroughly in his mind. Moreover, with all my strength, that is, with all my members. Also with all my mind, that is, all my senses, cogitations and thoughts must be directed unto God: Now I find in my self that I doe none of these. For if I must love God with all my heart, soule, strength and mind, it is requisite, that mine eyes shew no angrie twinkling or morion, that my tongue speak no angrie word, that my feet, hands, eares; &c. shew no sign of wrath, that my whole body even from the crown of the head, to the soles of the feet, and all things belonging thereunto, doe walke in charitie, be as it were ravished with love and pleasure toward God, and alwayes serve and worship him. Wherefore who is he which by the pleasure and love of vertue is chaste and righteous? there cannot be one such found in the earth. For we alwayes find our selves readier to wrath, hatred, envie, worldly pleasure, &c. then to meeknes and other vertue. I find in me not only a sparke, but even a fierie fornace of wicked lust: for there is no love in my heart, no not in all my members. Wherefore here in the Law as it were in a certaine Glasse, I see whatsoever is in me, to be damnable and cursed. For not one jot of the Law must perish, but all must be fulfilled, as Christ saith: Truly I say unto you, till heaven and earth passe, one jot or tittle of the Law shall not escape till all be fulfilled. Matth. 5. 18. Now thou findest not this in thee, that thou doest with all thy soule and heart, with cheerfullnes and pleasure, whatsoever the Law exacteth and requireth of thee. Hereupon thou art damned and under the dominion of Satan.

The Law therefore serveth us thus farre, to teach us, that wee are condemned: for by it we find all wicked desires in us, and yet not so much as a sparke of them ought to be in us. Howbeit our Schoole-men not marking this, have taught, that if one doe according to his ability, God doth give his grace unto him. They are blind guides: They grant themselves, that a man is carried with no pleasure or cheerfulness to that which is good, and yet doe they also teach, if one worketh, although it be with griefe, difficultie, and frowardnesse, that it is well with him before God. But Christ hath taught otherwise in this place, that

that we should worke that which is good with pleasure and love, readines and facilitie. Whom therefore shall we rather beleeve, Christ, or the Schoolmen? but I leave that to your judgement. Of such corrupt and evill understanding of the Law, Monasteries afterwards came, whereby entred into this opinion, that it was thought to be sufficient to salvation, to live in a Monastrie, and to follow the orders thereof, although that were done even with griefe of mind. So they taught. But Christ will have us to work with pleasure and cheerfulness, so that if any thing be done with burden or griefe of conscience, it is sinne: remove thy self therefore quickly from such a worke. Wherefore thus it might be said unto them: Behold O man, thou miserable creature oughtest to be carried with a certain delight to the doing of the law of God, but thou comest with no pleasure or cheerfulness hereunto, now see that thou shew thy pleasure and love herein, otherwise thou shalt be the enemy of God, and the friend of Satan: thus men leaving their own rashnes, might come to the knowledg of themselves, and might then say: Therefore, O God, am I condemned, and that not unjustly. Hereupon it followeth, that we are all under Satan, as long as we feel in us this difficultie and hardnes to do that which is good. Wherefore if I should speak the truth, I should say thus. I find indeed something that is good in the law of God, but it is my death, and if it could be, I would wish that it were not. So are all men affected in their heart, as Saint Paul plainly teacheth *Romans 7*. If wee should remaine in such condemnation, we must needs perish for ever.

There is therefore another part, that is, the Gospell, which sheweth comfort and salvation, declaring where that is to be had, whereby the Law is fulfilled. When therefore I know by the Law that I am a condemned man, then lie I half dead among thieves, Satan hath spoyled my soule, and hath moreover in Adam taken away all Faith, all Righteousnesse, and hath left nothing but bodily life, which is also quickly extinguished. Then come *Leuites* and *Priestes*, which teach this and that, but can helpe nothing, and so passe by. But when the *Samaritanes* cometh, he helpeth, that is, when Christ cometh, hee sheweth his mercy unto us, saying after this sort: behold thou oughtest indeed to love God with all thine heart, but thou doest it not, now beleeve only in me, and thou shalt enjoy my obedience as thine own: this only helpeth me: Then he putteth me on his own beast, that is, on himself, and carrieth me into the Inne, that is, into the Church of the faithfull, then he by and by poureth his grace into me, that is, oyle; that I may feelee myself to be laid upon his shoulder, that at the last maketh me to be of a good cheere, and quiet and well affected in conscience. Afterward he poureth in wine also, which with his sharpnes may abate and tame the force of old Adam. And yet am I not so wholly restored unto health, health is indeed poured in and begun,

but not yet wholly finished : then Christ hath care of me, and by his grace poured into me, doth purifie me, that from day to day I may become more chaste, meek, gentle, faithfull, &c. untill I wholly dye, for then I shall be altogether made perfect. So when we shall come to God the father, and be asked of him, whether we beleevd in God, whether we loved him, &c. the Samaritane Christ our Lord, who hath layed us on his own beast, will come forth and say: Lo Father, although they have not wholly fulfilled thy Law, yet have I fulfilled it, suffer thou that to turne to the commoditie of them that beleive in me. So is it needfull that all the Saints albeit very holy, be layed upon the back of Christ. If so be that the holiest of all, as the Priests and Levites could not satisfie the Law, how shall we go about with our tained workes, as with shaving, habit, &c. to fulfill the same? O wretched and miserable calamitie. These things shall now suffice to have been spoken concerning this text: Let us pray unto God, that he will give us his gra. ] **The 29. Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, concerning the exercise and increasing of faith.** [ *John 4 verse 46. to the 54* ] *There was a certain ruler whose sonne was sick, &c.*

**A**N excellent example of faith is set forth in this text, of what sort it is, of what nature and quality, namely, that it is not a resting or idle thing, but lively and void of idleness, which goeth not back, but proceedeth on, and still more and more increaseth, Which if it be not done, it is no faith, but only a dead opinion of God in the heart. For a true and sincere faith, which the holy Ghost poureth into the heart, cannot be idle: which I say for this cause, that no man be therefore secure, albeit he hath obtained faith, neither that he stay there. It is no thing to begin, unlesse we increase by continuall going forward, and come to greater knowledge of God. For on the contrary side it is the nature and qualitie of our adversarie Satan, not to be idle, as St. Peter saith: Satan sleepeth not, but goeth about as a roaring Lyon, seeking whom he may devour. It so be that the Devill is neither idle, neither sleep cometh upon him, neither shall it be meet for a Christian to be idle or put his hands in his bosom, forasmuch as he hath the Devill his enemy, who is stronger then himself: for he is called the prince of the world, as is mentioned in the Epistle appointed to be read in the Church on this day: *We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, and against the worldly governours, the princes of the darknes of this world, against spiritual wickednesse, which are in high places.* Eph. 6. 12. This prince governeth the world, furiously and fiercely rageth, and cannot suffer the prosperous successe of a Christian. Neither is it for his profit to be suffered of him, for an entrie being made hereby, his kingdom is burst in two, and his net torn in peeces, out of which as much as he

is able, he suffereth no Christian to escape. Moreover when the fire of faith is kindled, and the flame fostered, and Satan trieth and marketh that, by and by he practiseth deceit against it, for he knoweth how much hindrance his kingdom shall take thereby, wherefore as earnestly as he can, even with all his power, he defendeth his kingdom, and laboureth to keep all in obedience to him. Wherefore it is most certain, that when a Christian hath begun to beleve, by and by temptation and persecution will assaile him. Which if it come not to passe, it is a signe that his faith is not yet sound, and that he hath not as yet truly received the Gospel. For wicked Satan hath a very sharp sight, he by and by spieth out where is a true Christian, wherefore he applyeth himself wholly unto this, that he may inforce him to fall, may besiege him, and assaile him on every side: for he cannot suffer that any should revolt from his kingdom. It is perilous therefore for a man to beleve, for the Devill is ready that he may set upon him, and overthrow him, which sometime chanceth even to very holy men, which understand the word of God well, when they stand upright, and thinke themselves safe, that privie wicked seed commeth upon him by little and little, and wrestleth with them so long, till he overthrow them, and cast them to the earth. Set before thine eyes *Moses* and *Aaron*, who were goulds of the Jewes, they had an excellent faith, when they brought the people out of *Egypt*, and all the people in faith passed through the red Sea, death, the wide *Walderness*, and many other marvelous things, whereby they shewed their faith, but at the last they fall grievously, they feare that they shall perish with hunger. Is it not a thing most miserable, that by so great signes they shew their faith, they goe into death and through death, wrastle with it, and overcome it, and yet while they thinke themselves surest, they fall, and suffer themselves to be overcome of the belly murmur against God, and are so grievously tempted that they fall altogether. Wherefore it is not certain and sure, if one begin to beleve, and doth not always more and more increase in faith. Yea that godly man *Moses*, who had so great and so strong a faith, did fall also, when as he should bring water out of the rock with a staffe, he doubted, and talked thus to the people: Come, let us see whether we can bring water out of the rock. That good *Moses* which had shewed so many and so great signes, falleth into reason and carnall understanding, fearing lest the incredulitie of the people would hinder so great a miracle & sign. But it had behooved him to cleave fast to the word of God, & to thinke it higher, greater, stronger, and mightier then the unbelief of the people: that great man was tempted he stumbled, and was overthrown. We have like examples in the new Testament: *Peter* was hardie, & firm in faith, when he beheld Christ upon the water, he said unto him with a strong faith: Lord suffer me to come

to thee, committing himself to the water even as to the ship, he thought assuredly that the water would beare him. Then was there an excellent faith in *Peter*, and great courage, which durst commit himself wholly unto death in the midst of the sea, reposing his hope freely and boldly in Christ. But when he thought himself most safe, a storme and tempest ariseth, he forgetting the word, suffereth his faith to faile, and he himself also falleth, suffering Satan to pluck faith out of his heart. Faith truly is a subtile and delicate thing, a small thing maketh it sturble and fall. Satan is alwayes watchfull, and circumspect, and doth by and by obtaine his purpose, if we doe not diligently watch. How earnestly did the common people follow Christ? they thought that he was a Prophet, and did so cleave unto him, and so defend him, that the Princes of the people were made ashamed, neither durst they so much as lay hand on him. But when they apprehend him, proceed against him, fasten him to the crosse, the people forsake him all that they may, and come no more at him. A Prophet is present, and no man any more assisteth him, but they rather crie out against him, crucifie him, crucifie him: and that which is most detestible of all, his own Disciples revolt from him. What is become now both of their faith and holinesse? So is it at this day in our time: at the first when the Gospel began to shine, the preaching thereof was acceptable and pleasant, then many seemed willing to imbrace it; but when Munks and sacrificing Priests, Nunnes, &c. began to be spoken against, and the Masse to be confuted, all (a marvelous thing to be spoken) fell away as leaves of trees. Again, when Princes also were touched, the Gospel suffered greater persecution, and did by little and little dayly decrease. Moreover Satan is not idle, whereupon he stirreth up heresies and schismes, for how many sects have we hitherto suffered? he sleepeeth not, he will stirre up greater mischiefs also, he never resteth, but looketh about, and tryeth every way, that he may bring the matter to that passe, and prevaile so farre, that no sound doctrine may remaine in the Church, but that if all *Germanie* be diligently viewed, a Sermon may no where be found, wherein the word of God is truly preached, as it was before. He goeth about to extinguish and abolish all the doctrine of Christ now increasing, for he cannot abide it, it is not an easie thing to avoid so great an enemy, he lyeth in wait, and vieweth all places, and so diligently bestirreth himself, that even the learned fall, and the elect stumble, as *Moses*, *St. Peter*, with the rest of the Apostles. We think our selves safe, and live securely, no man considereth, no man hath a care of the word, we should pray and beseech God, that he would vouchsafe to preserve the Gospel, and make his holy name to be spread and published more abroad. But no man is touched with care hereof, no man prayeth

prayeth that it may have good successe. Wherefore it is to be feared, that at the last it will come to passe, that God will suffer Satan and us to run together into one, then shall we be in a desperate case, for hee will easily throw us to the ground, when we are come into so great miserie by our own slouthfulness and default. Satan moreover can set forth the matter by seditious spirits, that men shall think it to be iust. As the *Arrians* were perswaded that their opinion was sound. But a Christian humbleth himself, taketh nothing rashly upon himself, but with an humble heart saith thus unto God: Most gracious God, albeit I know that the cause which I favour is uniuert, yet without thy help I am not able to maintaine it, thou therefore help me, otherwise I shall be cast and overthrown. He is indeed certaine of his cause, even as *St. Peter* was on the water, who could not be surer, when the water did beare him. For he knew no let or hindrance, but when the wind was great, and the water troubled, he perceived what was wanting in him: which is thoroughly to be received into our mind, and considered of us. For albeit the certaintie of our cause be confirmed, strengthened, and ratified with plain sentences of the Scripture, yet is it by the might, counsell, and power of God, that we are defended, and Satan our chiefe aduersarie and enemy repressed. Which is therefore done that God may stirre us up to watch, and keep us in awe, that we may alwayes be watchfull, and crie unto him: Lord help us, and increase our faith, for without thee we are able to do nothing. Our heart must be alwayes so disposed, as though we began today to beleeve, and alwayes so affected, that we desire and labour to goe more and more forward. For that is the nature, force, and qualitie of faith, that it alwayes increaseth and waxeth stronger. Satan, as it is a little before mentioned, neither is idle nor resteth, if he be once overthrown he riseth againe, if he cannot enter in by the door, he endeavoureth to steale in on the backside, and if this be not permitted him, he breaketh in through the rooffe, or entureth in through a hollow place digged under the threshold, for he doth so long earnestly follow his work, untill he come in, he useth many deceits and practises, if he prevaileth not by one, he taketh in hand another, and doth that so long, untill he hath obtained his purpose. Man is a weak and a miserable thing, as *St. Paul* saith. 2 Cor. 4. *We have this treasure in earthen vessels.* I am more fraile then a pot compared to the potter, and a pot is a very weak thing, inasmuch as it is easily broken, and whatsoever is in it, is spilt. Now Satan when he marketh how great a treasure faith is, kept in a fraile pot (that I may so speak) he is in a great rage and furie, and saith thus unto us: I will touch thee, I will break thy pot, thou hast a great treasure, which I will spill. So God setteth the silly pot in the midst of enemies, which should utterly perish even in



in a moment, if he did not defend it, for it may quickly be shaken and broken in peeces, yea if it be but bitten of a viper, it perisheth. And is is not hard for Satan even in one moment to waite and destroy a whole country. Wherefore that vexeth him, that God dealeth with him so simply, setting a silly pot against him, when as he notwithstanding is so great a Prince and the most mightie ruler of this world. Now it would grieve me, if I being strong and valiant, any man should set upon me with a reed, surely I being moved with anger would break the reed in peeces: for I had rather that he would set upon me with a speare, sword, and armed on all parts. It grieved about *Goliath*, that *David* durst come unto him unarmed only with a staffe. So it greatly grieveth the Devill, that God will suppress him by flesh and blood, if some stout spirit should resist him, it would not grieve him so much, for that troubleth him above measure, that a silly worm, a fraile pot should come to despise him, an earthen vessell against a most mighty Prince, God hath laid up this treasure, saith *Paul*, in a miserable and weak vessell: for man is a weak creature, by and by moved to wrath, to covetousnes, to pride, &c. so that Satan may easily shake and break the vessell: for if God would permit him, he would forthwith break it all to peeces. Now all this is done, saith *Paul*, that we may know, that not by our own power, but by the power of God we are preserved from all evils, and especially from the force and fury of Satan, who goeth about like a roaring lyon, desiring to bruise and break the weak vessells and fraile pots: and that we may hereby also be stirred up to bee watchfull and to lift up our eyes toward heaven, and pray unto God that he will vouchsafe to increase and defend our faith, and preserve the vessell by his strength. Thus have we an entrance unto our text, it remaineth that we doe now consider the same in order: The Evangelist saith thus: *There was a certaine ruler whose sonne was sick at Capernaum.* It falleth out with many other men also, that they have their children sick: but that which he saith afterward is to be marked: *When he heard that Iesus was come out of Iudea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would goe down, and heale his sonne: for he was even ready to dye.* Here faith beginneth and trusteth in Christ. Now that he had faith the Gospel declareth: for he heard of Christ how he healed the sick, therupon his heart was set upon him, and he resorteth unto him thinking thus: If he helpeth all men hee will also help me, and will heale my son. He counteth Christ for such a man as is able to help men, and hopeth and promiseth to himself all goodnes from him: and that indeed is a true Christian heart, which cleaveth fast unto God. If that this ruler had stood in a place or way having two paths, doubting with himself he had not gone unto Christ, but his heart would have been thus affected: He helpeth others indeed, but

but who can tell, whether he will help me also? Howbeit he doth not thus doubt of Christ, but riseth, and maketh hast unto him. This is the beginning of faith, now ye shall see how Christ meeteth him on the other side, and answereth otherwise then he thought for, that his faith might be tried, and thus he saith unto him: *Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not beleve.* Christ said also to St. Peter. Mar. 14. *Why dost thou doubt, O thou of little faith?* Peter undoubtedly had faith, and did beleve in Christ, whereupon he committed himself to the water, but when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and began to be drowned: so in this place, that good man heareth a good report of Christ, that he helpeth every man, which he beleeveth and therefore resorteth unto him. But when he heareth that Christ denyeth to come, he stumbleth, and his faith faileth, fearing that Christ would not come unto him. This is as it were an assault and sore blow, here his new begun faith beginneth to be tempted. It was a hard saying: *Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not beleve:* which saying doth so tempt him, and bring him into doubt, that he almost faileth. Satan standing at his back, saith unto him: get thee home and look to thy business, for he wil not help thee. Notwithstanding the Ruler did not by and by leave off, but prayed the Lord moreover: *Lord come down before my son dye.* Here his faith began to be in danger and to faile, but God doth not forsake him, but lifeth him up again, and saith unto him: *Go thy way, thy son liveth.* If the ruler had not had faith, he would not have requested Christ to come to his son. What therefore doth he want? even this: he beleeveth it. Christ came to his house, he could then help his son, if he did not come, he could not help him. Neither did his faith extend so far, as to beleve that Christ even being absent could heale the sick: but it behooveth that he should have a higher faith. Wherefore Christ lifeth him up, & setteth him in a higher state, and saith unto him: *Go thy way thy son liveth.* Here he first ascendeth from his former faith, whereby he beleeveth that Christ could heale being present, and cometh to a higher faith, so that now he beleeveth the word. For if he had not beleeveth the word, he would not have left Christ, neither would have departed from him, untill he had come with him to his house. But having laid hold on the word, he cleaveth unto it by faith, for his son is at home, and Christ is with his father. Wherefore the father receiveth this word in his hearr, and thinketh with himself after this sort: *My son is sick, but I shall find him whole:* which faith was contrary both to reason and experience. Reason would have thought thus: *When I came from my son he was sick, as I did leave him, so shall I find him.* But faith saith otherwise, it rekteth only in the word and trusteth wholly unto it, neither doubteth it, that any thing will fall out otherwise then the word speaketh: *Go thy way, thy sonne liveth.* This is a right and strong faith, when as a man leaveth  
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sense, wisdom, reason, and trusteth wholly, to the word of God. Christ saith, *thy sonne liveth*: And he saith with himself, without doubt it is true, I shall so find it. So faith remaineth not idle, nor resteth, but increaseth and goeth forward. Thus Christ dealeth with us also, hee suffereth us to be tempted, that we may increase in faith: if in the end of our life when we must dye, we shall have but a sparke of such faith, we shall be in a good case, as Christ saith unto his Disciples *Matth. 17. If ye have faith as much as is in a graine of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountaine: Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall be removed: and nothing shall be impossible unto you.* A grain of mustard seed is but a small thing, but he that hath faith agreeable to the smalnes of this graine, shall be saved. Neither must we so much consider this, that our faith is little, but we must look unto this, we must have regard unto this, that the graine of mustard seed doe remaine, and be not eaten up of the birds. That Satan pluck not faith out of our hearts. We must not look how little the faith is, but we must regard and take heed that faith be not taken away. *Peter* had faith upon the sea, and therefore was he carried of the water, that he should not be drowned, if he had so persevered in faith, he might well have walked an hundred miles upon the sea, but when he failed in faith, he began to be drowned. So *Moses* had a strong faith, but he fell from it. It consisteth not in the strength or slendernes of faith, that we doe stand, but in persevering and remaining faithfull. It may be that he shall persever in faith, which hath but a slender faith, and he that hath a strong faith shall fall and doubt. *Moses* and *Peter* had an excellent faith, so that *Moses* by faith did lead the people through the midst of the sea and death, and *Peter* without doubting went down out of the ship into the sea, but they fell from their faith, howbeit God raiseth them up quickly again. But the Theefe on the crosse having once laid hold of faith, continued constant. Now God therefore suffereth it to be thus, that he may bring down rash arrogancie, that we doe not gloriously extoll our selves, but alwayes remaine in feare and awe. For when temptation commeth upon us, we do forthwith fall into error, if God do not assist and strengthen us, of which thing we may see a very goodly similitude in a tree, which in the Spring time buddeth and openneth it self, so that it doth as it were become white by reason of the blossoms. A shewer falling upon it, many of the blossoms are shaken of, and the frost also doth much more consume them. Afterward when the fruit beginneth to spring forth, some great wind blowing, much of it being newly come forth falleth down, and when it waxeth ripe, the Caterpillar commeth, which with other Worms gnaweth and spoyleth it so much, that scarce the twentieth part, yea scarce the hundreth part many times remaineth. The same commeth to passe with the hearers of

of the Gospel, in the beginning thereof every one covereth to be a true Christian, every one liketh of it very well, and the first fruits thereof are very pleasant. But when wind, a shewer, or temptation cometh, all fall away from it by companies: afterwards sects and seditions arise, which like unto wormes and kankers gnaw and infect the fruits of the Gospel, and so many false opinions spring up, that very few do persever in the true profession of the Gospel. We have here, thanks be given to Almighty God, the word of God plentifully taught, we are delivered out of deep and great darknesse, but we forgetting the word are made weake, we live having no care of the word, for it is not savoury unto us. But when as hereafter false Prophets shall break in with their corrupt opinions, and Satan also shall violently assaile us, finding us idle, and the house swept and garnished, he will bring with him seven other spirits worse then himself, and the end shall be worse then the beginning. Which things if they so fall out, let us not therefore be quite discouraged, but let us rather instruct one another, that we may learne to cleave unto God, and pray unto him, and say: Mercifull God, thou hast given unto me to become a Christian, give unto me also that I may persevere, and become daily richer in faith. Albeit the whole world did resist, and every one conspired to destroy the Gospel, yet will I be nothing moved, but by thy divine help will depend on the Gospel. But to returne againe to the Ruler, ye have heard that his faith was very notable and excellent, he heareth the word, *Thy sonne liveth*, he beleeveth it, and goeth away giving honour to God; he receiveth the only word, betraileth wholly unto it. Hereupon God dealeth so graciously with him, that he restoreth health unto his sonne, raiseth him up, and strengtheneth him in faith, neither suffereth him to stick in doubt or infirmie, but establisheth him, and maketh him strong, and causeth him to go forward and increase. Neither doth God delay untill he cometh home, but declareth unto him being yet in his journey, the health of his sonne, sending his servants to meet him, that they might bring him good newes, and say: thy sonne liveth. For God cannot deferre or delay, where there is a sincere heart, which trusteth in him alone, all other things being left, looking only unto the word of God, where God cannot hide himself, but revealeth himself, and cometh unto such a heart, and make this abode there, as the Lord saith *Job. 14*. Now what can be more ioyfull, then for a man to give credit to the word of God, and to be plucked from it by no affliction or temptation, but to shut his eyes against every assault of Satan, to lay aside his humane senses, understanding, reason, and wisdom, and to say daily in his heart: *God hath spoken it, he cannot lye.* I say nothing is more ioyfull then such a faith. For whatsoever we ask of God with such a faith, we receive it  
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more abundantly of him, then ever wee desired it, and God is sooner present with us, then we had thought, Hereupon the *Evangelist* useth so many wordes even unprofitable, as it appeareth unto us, as these. *The man believed the word that Iesus had spoken unto him, and went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him, saying, Thy sonne lieth: Then inquired he of them the houre when he began to amend, and they said unto him. Yesterday the seventh houre the Fever left him. Then the Father knew, that it was the same houre in the which Iesus said unto him. Thy sonne lieth.* All which tend unto this end, that we should know that if wee believe in the Lord he will give us abundantly, whatsoever we shal pray unto him for. The conclusion the *Evangelist* maketh as followeth, *And he believed and all his household.* He so increased in faith, that he did not only ascend from a low state to an higher, but he brought others also unto faith. He had surely an effectuall faith, which did not rest idle and sloathfull in the heart, but did breake forth, so that whosoever were in his house were brought unto faith. For this is plainly the nature of faith, this is the quality of it, to draw others unto it, to burst forth and apply it selfe even unto the worke of love, as *S. Paul* witnesseth *Gala. 5.* That faith which worketh by love, is effectual. For it cannot keep silence or be idle, as *David* saith *Psal. 116.* which place *Paul* applieth to the faithfull. *2. Cor. 4,* *I believed and therefore have I spoken.* Faith can doe no other, for it is enforced to speak, neither can it keep silence, inasmuch as he that is endued with it, endeavoureth to profit his Neighbour. This Ruler had faith for himself, but it doth not remaine in him alone, but breaketh forth. For without all doubt he declared to his Family, how he came unto Christ, & received comfort of him, which they also believed: So we also, when we believe must open our mouth, and confesse the grace, which God hath shewed unto us. Which is the chief and most excellent work of faith, that one instruct another in the word. For *Paul* saith *Rom. 10.* *With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth man confesseth to salvation.* If we be ashamed of this word, it is a certaine argument of a very light and uncertain faith. We see therefore that there is no difference with Christ between the strong and the weake in faith: for a little faith is faith also. He therefore came into the world that he might receive to himself, beare and susteine the weake. If he were so impatient as we be, he would by and by say unto us: Get thee from me, I will none of thee, because thou believest not in me. But this thing is greatly to be commended, when one can handle the weake gently, and doe not deale rigorously with them, and repel them by impatiency. For although they be weak to day, the houre may come, when they shal receive the word more abundantly then we. Thus we ought to instruct and reach one another, that we may depend

depend on the word of God, For if we continue in sticking to the word, we shall be strong enough for the Devil: for we glory of the word, albeit we be but weak. Unto Satan, who is able even in one houre to overthrow us all, all men should be even as a Feather, which he would be able to remove away how and when he will, yea even with his breath, but if we believe, that Feather is made more hea-  
vie unto him then the hill *Olympus*. For a Christian beareth Christ in himself, and Christ is heavier then heaven and earth. Thus much may suffice concerning this text. **The 30. Sermon of Dr. Mar-**

**tin Luther, concerning free remission of finnes to the contrite and broken in heart, and terrible judgement to the indurate and obstinate.** [*Matth. 18. verse 23. to the 35.*] *Verse 23. Jesus said, &c.*

**C**hrist brought forth this parable unto that answer which he had made to Saint Peter, unto whom he had before committed the Keyes of binding & loosing. For when S. Peter asked him how oft he should forgive his Brother his offence, whether it were enough to forgive him seven times, and he answered, not seven times, but seventy times seven times, he then added this similitude, by which he inferreth, that his heavenly Father will doe likewise unto us, if we doe not forgive our Neighbour, even as the King did here unto the Servant, which would not forgive his Fellow. servant a small debt, when as his Lord had forgiven him so much. We have oftentimes taught that the kingdom of God wherein he reigneth by the Gospell, is nothing else, but such a state or government, wherein is meere forgiveness of sins: so that where such a government is not, wherein sin is pardoned, neither is there the gospel nor Kingdom. Wherefore those two kingdoms are to be separated: one, wherein sins are punished, & another wherein they are forgiven, or wherein the law is exacted, & wherein that which is due by the law, is remitted. In the kingdom of God, where he reigneth by the Gospell, there is no exacting of the law, neither any dealing by the law, but only remission & forgiveness, neither wrath or punishing, but brotherly service & well doing one to another. Notwithstanding the civill law or Magistracie is not taken away, for this parable speaketh not any thing of worldly government, but of the Kingdom of God only. Wherefore he that is yet govern'd only by the regiment of the world, is yet far of from the kingdom of heaven, for worldly government pertaineth wholly to inferior things. As if a Prince govern his people so, that he suffer injury to be done to none, punishing offenders, he doth well, & is therefore commended. For in that government this sentence flourisheth: Pay that thou owest: which if thou do not, thou shalt be cast into prison. Such government we must have, howbeit we come not to heaven by it, neither is the world therefore saved, but this government is therefore necessary, that the world do not become worse. For it is only a defence & fortification against wickednes, which if it were not, one would devour another

other, neither could any man keep in safety his own life, wife, goods, children, &c. That therefore all things should not fall, come to ruine, and perish, God hath appointed the sword of the Magistrate, whereby wickednesse may be partly repressed, peate and quietnes among men maintained, and one may not doe another iniurie, wherefore this is in any wise to be kept. But, as I said, it is not ordained for them that are in the kingdom of grace, but therefore only, that men be not more deeply plunged in wickednes, and become worse. Wherefore no man that is only under the regiment of the world, ought to glorie, that he doth therefore well before God, before whom all is yet unrighteous. For thou must come so far that thou doe resign that which is iust before the world, and yeeld of thine own right. This the Gospel doth here require, which on either side setteth forth unto us only forgiveness. First the Lord forgiveth the servant all the debt; then he requireth of him, that he forgiue his fellow servant his, and remit his offence. These things God requireth, and so must his kingdom be ordered: that no man be so wicked, neither suffereth himself so to be moved, that he cannot forgive his neighbour. And as it is a little before this text taught of the Gospel, if he should provoke thee to anger even seventy times seven times, that is as often as he can offend against thee, thou must yeeld of thine own right, and cheerefully forgive him all things. Why so? because Christ did the same. For he set up and erected such a kingdome, as wherein is only grace, which must be no time cease, so that if thou repent all things may wholly be forgiven thee, as often as thou shalt offend. Forasmuch as he hath ordained the Gospel, that it might preach no punishment but only grace and forgiveness of sinnes. This kingdome standing, thou mayest alwaies rise againe, how deeply soever thou fallest, and so often as thou fallest, so as thou repent. For albeit thou fallest, yet this Gospel and mercie seat alwayes continueth. As soone as therefore thou hast risen again and returned, thou hast grace restored. Howbeit he requireth this of thee, that thou also forgive thy neighbour all things, which he hath committed against thee, otherwise thou shalt not be in this kingdom of grace, neither shalt become partaker of that which the Gospel preacheth, that thy sinnes may be forgiven thee. This briefly is the summe and meaning of this text.

Moreover we must not here omit, to declare who they be that receive the Gospel, and unto whom it is acceptable. For surely that kingdom and government, wherein God reigneth and ruleth by the Gospel, is most excellent and gentle, for as much as it meete forgiveness of sinnes is preached, howbeit it pierceth not into the heart of every one, neither is it considered or esteemed of all. For thou mayest finde many light and unconstant men, who abuse the Gospel and lead  
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their life dissolutely and loosely, doing what they list, who thinke that they should be rebuked of none, seeing that the Gospell teacheth nothing but forgiveness of sinnes. The Gospell is not preached to these, who doe so vilely esteeme of a precious treasure, and deale lightly with it. Wherefore neither doe they pertaine to this kingdom but to worldly government, that they may be stopped and let from doing whatsoever they like and list. To whom then is it preached? To them which thoroughly feelee such miserie, as this Servant did here. Wherefore consider what happeneth unto him: The Lord taketh pittie of his misery, forgiveth him more then he durst desire. But before this is done, the text saith, the Lord first took account of his Servants, and when he began to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand tallents: and because he had nothing to pay, his Lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and the debt to be payed. Which truly were no pleasant words, but even exceeding severity and most terrible judgement, then is he brought in to so great perplexity and distresse, that he falleth down on the ground and asketh mercy, and promiseth more then he hath, or is able to pay, saying: Lord refraine thine anger toward me, and I will pay thee all.

Here is set forth unto us, who they be, unto whom the Gospel is acceptable. For so cometh it to passe between God and us. When God will take an account of us, he sendeth forth the preaching of his Law, whereby we learne to know what wee ought to doe: As when God saith to the conscience: Thou shalt worship no other God, but shalt acknowledge me alone for God, shalt love me with all thine heart, and repose thy trust and hope in me only. This is the booke of accounts wherein is written what we owe, which he taking into his hands, readeth before us, and saith. Lo, this thou oughtest to have done, thou oughtest to feare, love, and worship me alone, thou oughtest to trust in me alone, and from me to promise to thy self all good things. Howbeit thou doest otherwise, thou art mine adversarie, thou beleevest not in me, but reposest thy trust in other things: and in a summe, thou seest here, that thou doest not observe so much as the least point of the law. When the conscience hath heard these things, and the law hath touched one well, he seeth then what he ought to doe, and what he hath not done, and findeth that he hath not kept so much as a letter of the law, and is compelled to confesse, that he hath not performed that obedience and duty which God justly requireth of him. What doth the Lord now? When the conscience is thus touched, and feelleth it self condemned, and is distressed with exceeding great miserie, he saith: Sell him, and whatsoever he hath, and let him pay the debt. This is the judgement, which forthwith followeth, when the law hath revealed sinne, and said: This thou must doe, that thou

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oughtest to have done, thou hast done nothing thereof : For to sinne is required punishment, that man may be compelled to pay. For God hath not so made his law, that he doth not punish them that transgresse it. It is not sweet and pleasant, but bringeth bitter and horrible paine with it, it delivereth us to Satan, it casteth us down to Hell, and leaveth us wrapped in retraction, untill we have payed the utmost farthing. This Sr. *Paul* hath notably well declared *Rom. 4.* where he saith. *The Law worketh nothing but wrath.* That is, when it revealeth unto us, that we have done unjustly, it setteth nothing before us, but wrath and indignation. For when the Conscience seeth that it hath committed evil, it seeth that it hath deserved eternall death, after which followeth punishment, whereupon it is compelled to despaire.

This is that that the Lord commandeth this servant together with all his substance to be sold, forasmuch as he is not able to pay. But what doth the Servant say ? the foolish fellow thinketh yet, that he shall pay the debt, he falleth downe and prayeth that he will have patience with him. This is the wound and crosse of all Consciences, that when sinne biteth them so, that they feelee in how evill case they are before God, there is no rest in them, they but run hither and thither, seeking about, that they may be delivered from sinnes, and rashly take upon them as yet to doe so great things, as wherewith they shall pay God, as we hitherto have been instructed, whereupon came so many pilgrimages, collegiate houses, Monasteries, Masses and other trifles. VVe pined our selves with fasting, we scourged our selves with VVhips, we were made Monkes, and Nunnes : therefore only, for that we went about to lead such a life, and to doe such and so many workes, as wherunto God might have respect, and thereby be pacified, thinking so to appease and make quiet our Consciences, so wee committed the same things that this foolish fellow did. Such a heart as is touched with the Law, and throughly feeleth it owne miserie and calamity is humbled truly and indeed. Whereupon it falleth down before the Lord and craveth mercy, howbeit it is yet defiled with this vice, that it striveth to help it selfe, which thing cannot be taken away from nature, when as the conscience feeleth such miserie, it dareth presume to promise more then all the Angells in heaves are able to performe. Then is it an easie matter to perswade it to apply it selfe to doe, whatsoever can be required of it. For it findeth it selfe alwayes in such a case, that it hopeth that it is able by workes to satisfie for sinnes. Consider those things which have been hitherto of long time done in the world, then shalt thou finde these things to be so : For thus was it preached, give somewhat so the building of a Church : Get to be admitted into an holy *Monasterie*, institute *Masses*, and thy sinnes shall be forgiven thee. And when consciences were urged in confession, the

they would not stick to say : Whatsoever was enjoyned us, we have committed nothing of it, yea we have given more then we were commanded. Miserable men rejoyced that by this meanes they might provide for themselves, and therefore they pined and afflicted themselves, that they might be unburdened of their sinnes, yet did it prevaile them nothing. For the conscience remained in doubt as before, that is knew not how it stood before God. But if it were secure and quiet, it fell in to that which is worle to thinke that God hath respect unto workes, neither can reason doe any other but depend of workes. The Lord therefore is touched with affection of mercy toward that miserie, wherewith the servant so intangled and snared with sinnes, is holden, and taking pittie upon him, doth forgive and dismisse him. Here is now set forth unto us, what is the speciall office and quality of the Gospell, and how God dealeth with us. When thou art so drowned in sinnes, and weariest thy self, that thou mayst dellver thy self from them, the Gospell cometh to thee, and saith: Doe not so deare Brother, it prevaileth nothing, although thou afflict and torment thy selfe even till thou be mad, thy workes doe not profit, but the mercy of God shall deliver thee, who is touched with thy miserie : for he seeth thee wrapp'd in calamity, and wearying thy self, that thou mayest deliver thy self out of the myre, and yet art not able : he, I say, hath regard unto this, that thou art not able to pay. whereupon he forgiveth thee all, and that of his mere mercy. For he doth not forgive thee the debt, either for thy workes or meritts, but for that he taketh pittie upon thyerie, complaint and mourning, and thy falling down before his knees: that is, God hath respect to an humbled heart, as the Prophet saith *Psa. 51. The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit, a broken and contrite heart, & God shall then not despise.* Such a heart he saith, as is broken and humbled, which is not able to help it selfe, but craveth the help of God, and rejoyceth in it, such a heart is an acceptable sacrifice to God, and he that hath it, is in the right way to heaven. Now God having shewed his mercy unto him, and taken pittie on his miserie, ceaseth to follow his right, and abrogateth it, and saith no more : Sell whatsoever thou hast and pay the debt : although he might goe forward and say : Thou must pay for this my Law requireth, which I will not have abrogated for thy sake : yet will he no deale with him by the Law, but changeth the Law into grace and favour, taketh pittie on him, and dismisseth him with his wife, children, and all his substance, & doth also forgive him the debt. This is that which God suffereth to be preached by the Gospell: unto him that believeth, is remitted not only the fault, but also the punishment, and that of mere mercy, not for any works sake. For he that preacheth, that by works, the fault and the punishment may be put away, hath even then denied the Gospell, forasmuch as these

two cannot agree together, that God hath mercie on thee, and yet that thou dost merit some thing. For if it be grace, it is no merit: but if it be merit, then shall it not be grace, but debt: for if thou pay thy debt, he sheweth thee no mercy: but if he sheweth thee mercy, thou dost not make payment. Wherefore we must needs acknowledge his mercy toward us, we must receive of him, and beleeve in him, which the Gospel here requireth. After therefore that this servant is thus humbled with the knowledge of his sinne, the word is exceeding comfortable unto him, wherein the Lord pronounceth him free, and forgive him both the fault and the punishment. Whereby is also declared, that it toucheth not sluggish hearts, that feele no sinne, neither those that are carried with rashnesse, but only such afflicted consciences, as are pressed with the heaie burden of their sinnes, which do greatly desire to be delivered from them, of them God hath mercy, and forgiveth them all. Wherefore it behoved this servant to receive the word, for unlesse he had received it, forgiveness had profited nothing, nay there had been no forgiveness at all. It is not therefore enough, that God suffereth remission of sinnes, and a golden year full of grace to be preached unto us, but it is necessary that we receive and beleeve it in heart. If thou beleeve, thou art free from sinnes. This is the first part of a Christian life, which both this place and divers other in the Gospels do teach us, which consisteth properly in faith, which alone hath to do before God: whereby also it shewed that the Gospel cannot be received but of a troubled and miserable conscience. Hereupon now may be infered that they are plain delusions, whatsoever things are any otherwise taught concerning our works, and free will, to wit, that they put away sinnes, and obtaine grace. For the divine maicesty alone, beholding our miserie, hath pittie upon us, for the text sheweth manifestly, that God pardoneth and forgiveth them, that have nothing, and concludeth that we have nothing left, wherewith we may pay God. Howsoever therefore thou hast free will in temporal matters, yet thou hearest here that it is nothing before God. Wherefore if thou desire to be delivered from thy sinnes, thou must cease to trust in any of thy workes, and must plainly despaire concerning them, and flie unto Christ, pray unto God for grace, finally receive the Gospel by faith. Now followeth the other part, wherein this fellow servant also is dealt with. This servant now hath enough, he saveth his body, goods, wife, children, &c. and hath his Lord favourable unto him. Wherefore he should surely be very foolish, if hee should now depart, and do what he is able for the reconciliation of his Lord, for his Lord might worthily say that he is mocked of him. Hee hath need therefore of no work, but that he receive such grace and favour as is offered him, so may he be of a good cheer, giving thanks to his

his Lord, and dealing so with others as his Lord hath dealt with him. After the same sort it is with us, for when we beleve, we have God favourable and mercifull unto us, neither do we need any thing more, but now it were time that we should forthwith die. Notwithstanding if we must as yet live still in the earth, our life ought to be ordered so, that we seek not to obtain the favour of God by workes. For he that doth this, doth mock and dishonour God, as it hath been hitherto taught, that God is to be solicited so long by good workes, prayers, fastings, and such like, untill we obtaine his grace and favour. Wee have obtained grace not by workes, but by mercie, now if thou must live, thou must have what to doe, and wherewith to occupie thy self, and it is meet that all this be referred to thy neighbour. The servant went out, as Christ saith, and found his fellow servant, whom he taketh by the throat and dealeth rigorously with him, and will be wholly paid of him, shewing him no mercy or favour at all, I have said elsewhere, that Christians must burst forth by workes, and by their deeds before men witnesse that they have a sincere faith. God needeth no workes, but faith sufficeth him, howbeit he therefore requireth them to be done of thee, that by them thou mayest shew thy faith, both before thy self and also before the whole world, for he knoweth thy faith very well, but thou thy self and men do not yet thoroughly see it. Thou therefore must direct such workes so, that they may profit thy neighbour. Now whereas this servant should thus have done, what doth he? even the same that we doe, who seem unto our selves to beleve, and partly have faith, and are glad that we have heard the Gospel, whereof we can dispute and talke many things, but no man goeth about to expresse it in his life. We have brought the matter so far, that the doctrine and trifles of Satan are somewhat abated and laid aside, that we doe now see and know, what is just and what unjust: that we must have to doe with God by only faith, and by workes with our neighbour. But wee cannot bring it to this passe, that love may begin, and doe that to another which God hath done unto us, as we our selves complain, that many of us are become worse then they were before. As therefore this servant refused to remit his neighbour the debt, and dealt extremely with him, so also we, saying: It is not meet that I should give that that is mine to another, neglecting mine own right. If this man hath provoked me to anger, it is his duty to pacifie me, and to labour by intreatie to put away mine anger. Truly thus the world teacheth and doth, for it affirmeth it to be just and righte. Neither will any Prince or Magistrate enforce thee to give that which is thine unto another, but will suffer thee to doe what pleaseth thee with thine own goods. The Magistrate indeed restraineth thee from doing what thou list with the good of another, but he constraineth thee not to give thine

own substance to another, for that is against the Law of nations, which even reason pronouncing it, giveth to every one that which is his own: wherefore he doth not unequally or unjustly which useth his owne things at his will, and taketh not away wrongfully the goods of another. But what doth the Gospell say? If God also had held his own right and said: I doe well in that I punish Offenders, and take that which is mine own, who shall let me? what I pray you should become of us all? We should be thrust downe to Susan. Wherefore whereas he hath left his right toward thee, he will have thee doe the same toward other, and therefore thou abrogating thine owne right, thinke thus with thy self: If God hath forgiven me tenne thousand talents, why should not I forgive myneighbour an hundred pence? God might have exacted his own right, neverthelesse he doth not so, but becommeth a favourable Lord unto thee, taketh pittie upon thee, and forgiveth thee: why therefore shouldest not thou do likewise to thyneighbour? Wherefore if thou wilt have to doe in his kingdome, thou must doe as he doth: but if thou hadst rather remaine in the kingdom of the world, thou shalt never enter into his kingdom. Hereunto pertaineth that sentence, which Christ in the last day shall pronounce upon the unbelievers: *I was an hungred, and ye gave mee no meat: I thirsted, and ye gave me no drinke, &c.* Mat. 4. 42. But if thou contend here against: Notwithstanding ye say, that God will not have respect unto works, neither will save any because of them. If say he will have them done frankly and freely, not that we may meritt any thing thereby, but that we may doe them to the profit of our neighbours, and witnesse our sincere faith by them. For what hast thou that thou mayest give him, and wherby thou mayest deserve that he should pardon whatsoever thou hast committed against him? Or what doth he get thereby? nothing truly, but that thou givest unto him praise and thanks. And this is the other part of a Christian life, the name whereof is love. They therefore that shew not their faith by the works of love are such servants, as will have themselves forgiven, when as they notwithstanding doe not forgive their neighbour, neither yeeld of their owne right, with whom it shall likewise fall out as it did with this servant. For when the other servants (that is, the ministers and preachers of the Gospell) shall see it, that God hath forgiven them all, and yet they will not forgive any, they are troubled, that they are compelled to see such things, and it grieveth them very sore, that men doe so undifferently apply themselves to the Gospell, and not rightly receive it. What do they then? They can do no other, but come to their Lord, and complain unto him of such things, and say: Lord, thus it is: thou forgavest them both the fault and the punishment, yea pardonest them all things, and yet we cannot bring them so far, as to deal so with others  
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as thou hast dealt with them. This is the complaint: the Lord therefore will cause them to come before him in the last judgement, and will lay those things against them saying: when thou wast afflicted with hunger, thirst, miserie, &c. I did help thee: when thou didst lye drowned in sins, I having mercy upon thee, did forgive thee. Hast thou done the same to thy neighbour? Then he shall pronounce this sentence on him: Thou wicked one, I was touched with mercy toward thee, yea I yielded of mine own right, but thou wouldest not take pittie on others, nor forgive them their offence, wherefore thou shalt now pay the debt. Here is no grace and mercie, but most grievous wrath and eternall condemnation, then no prayers to help, wherefore he is compelled to hold his peace, and is thrown headlong into paine, untill he pay the uttermost farthing. This is that which *S. Peter* hath spoken of them, *2 Pet. 2. 21.* which after they have heard the Gospel, notwithstanding go back, that it had been better for them, if they had never acknowledged the way of righteousness, then after they have acknowledged it, to turn from the holy commandment given unto them. Why had it been better? Because while they go back, it becommeth worse with them then it was before they heard the Gospel, as *Christ* saith of the unclean spirit *Mat. 12.* which taketh unto himself seven other spirits worse then himself, with which he commeth, and dwelleth in that man, out of whom he before had gone, and so the end of that man is worse then the beginning. After the same manner commeth it to passe with us, and shall hereafter also be usuall: so also hath it falne out with *Rome*. In the time of the *Martyrs* she was in her best flower, but afterward she fell, and abomination was there erected, that *Antichrist*, might reigne there, yea she became such a one, that worse she cannot be. The grace of God, which is revealed and preached by the Gospel was hidden, that men might not attain unto it: wherefore it could not be but a great and grievous scourge & plague should follow. So we also shall trie that great vengeance will come upon us, for that we doe not beleve nor obey the Gospel, which we have & know. For as often as God would send an horrible scourge and plague, he hath first set up a great light: As when he would send the jews out of their own country into captivity in *Babylon*, he first raised up the godly King *Hosia*, who should again restore the law, that the people might amend their life, but when they did again revolt, God punished them according to their desert. So when he minded to destroy the *Egyptians*, he made a light to be set up, & preached unto them by *Moses & Aaron*: Moreover when he would drown all the world by the flood, he sent the Patriarch *Noah*, but when men did not amend, but became worse & worse, such a sore and grievous plague did follow, Likewise the 5. Cities *Sodom* and *Gomorab* together with therest were destroyed, for that they would not hear *Lot*.

who feared God. Wherefore as sharp vengeance shall light upon them also, which heare the Gospel, but doe not receive it : even as the servant here in the Gospel, is delivered to the tormentors till he should pay all the debt : which is as much in effect as, that he is compelled to suffer punishment for his fault, and is never saved. For unto sinne is required death, and when he dyeth, he dyeth alwaies, neither is there any help or deliverance remaining. Wherefore let us receive these things for our own admonition ; as for them that will not heare, being hardned and indurate, let them beware of the evill that hangeth over them. This is a very comfortable text, and sweet to troubled consciences, in as much as it containeth in it meer forgiveness of finnes : Again it setteth forth terrible judgement to the unmercifull and hard hearted, especially seeing that this servant is not an Heathen, but had heard the Gospel, in that he had faith : inasmuch as the Lord took pittie on him, and forgave him his offences, without doubt he was a Christian. Wherefore this is not the punishment of Gentiles, nor of the common sort that heare not the Gospel, but of them that with their eares heare the Gospel, and with their tongue talke of it, but will not expresse it in their life. We have therefore the summe of this text, Whereas the Schoolmen dispute here, whether sinne cometh againe, which was before remitted, I let it passe, for they are ignorant what remission of finnes is : they think it is a thing that cleaveth to the heart, and lyeth quietly, when as notwithstanding it is plainly the king Iom of Christ, which endureth for ever without ceasing. For as the Sunne neverthelesse shineth, although I shut mine eyes : so this mercy seat or forgiveness of sinne standeth alwaies, albeit I fall. And as I againe behold the Sun when I open mine eyes : so I againe have forgiveness of finnes, if I rise againe, and returne unto Christ. Wherefore let no man bring forgiveness into such a strait, as these mad men dream of. **The 31. Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther,** teaching that we must cleave wholly to Christ, and look to ob-  
taine all good things from him. [Matth. 9. Verse 18. to the 26.]  
*While Iesus spake unto the people, behold there came a certain ruler, &c.*  
**D**early beloved, ye know that the Gospel is nothing else, but a treasure of the only person, whose name is Christ. And albeit there be extant many bookes and sundrie treatises concerning divers men, as well of the Gentiles as Christians, yea and of the mother of God, S. Peter, the Angells, and of many other Saints beside : yet be they not Gospels, but that only is the sincere Gospel, which setteth forth Christ unto us, and what good we must hope for from him. Sometime in the Gospel there is mention made of *John the Baptist, Mary,* and the Apostles, howbeit this is not properly the Gospel, but therefore it is written of them, that it might be more perfectly declared,

red, from whence Christ should come, and what is his office. So *Luke* describeth the historie of *Iohn* the Baptist even from the beginning, what was done both in his conception and in his nativitie, he writeth also of the virgin *Mary*. All which things were committed to writing not because of their person, but because of Christs person only. In the Epistle of *S. Paul* there is nothing committed to memorie of the Saints, but all things found plainly of Christ. For God hath so ordained, that all must depend on that one man Christ, must hope in him: must repose their trust in him, if they desire to be saved, for he alone is set forth of God to be a reconciliation for us, as *Paul* saith *Rom. 3*. Hitherto one hath cleaved to this Saint, another to that, one chose to himself *St. Mary*, another *S. Barbarie*, and divers sects and sorts of religion did flourish. But Christ was in no price, for his name only remained. VVe had many intercessors, all which being neglected we ought to have cleaved only to Christ. Hereupon *S. Paul* saith, that the Gospel was promised of God by the Prophets concerning his son. He reduceth and bringeth it into such a streight, that in the Gospel nothing is of any importance which concerneth not Iesus Christ. Hee that knoweth this, let him give thanks to God, that he knoweth where he may seek for consolation and help, and in whom he may repose his trust. Christ in this dayes Gospel is set forth unto us, that he is conversant in the midst of the people, and draweth all the world unto himself with his gentlenesse and sweet doctrine, that they may cleave unto him in their heart, that they may commit themselves to his goodnes, and hope that they shall obtaine of him both spirituall and corporall good things. Neither doth he receive any thing of them, upon whom he bestoweth benefits, nay he obtaineth nothing of them but ignominie and scorning, as is declared in this text. A benefit proceedeth from him, for which he receiveth a mock and reproach. Now the Gospel is preached and offered to the whole world, that we may learne to know this man well, and how we must be made Christians, and not how we must be made good. Other treatises beside the Gospel teach of those things, whereby men may be made good, as the writings of the Philosophers and the rules of the civill law. The lives also of the Saints have especiall respect unto this, that men may imitate them. It belongeth not to the Gospel to make good men, but to make Christian men. For it is far more excellent to be a Christian, then an honest and good man. A Christian can say nothing of his own goodnes or righteousness, for he findeth in himself nothing either good or righteous, but he must flie to the righteousness which is in another, and which commeth unto him from another. Hereupon Christ is set forth unto us as a continuall fountaine, which always overfloweth with meere goodnesse and grace, for which he receiveth nothing of us, but that



that the godly do acknowledge so great goodnes and grace, do give him thanks for the same, do praise and love him, others in the mean season mocking him, such a reward he receiveth of them. Wherefore one is not therefore called a Christian, for that he worketh much, for there is another thing, which is cause hereof, namely for that he receiveth and draweth from Christ. If one receiveth nothing any more of Christ, neither is he any more a Christian, so that the name of a Christian commeth only by receiving, and not by giving or doing. If thou think that because of thy works and deeds thou art a Christian, thou hast even then lost the name of Christ. Good works indeed are to be done, counsell thereunto is to be given and received, but no man is therefore called a Christian, neither is any therefore a Christian. Wherefore if any will more inwardly weigh this name, in this respect only a Christian is to be acknowledged, inasmuch as he receiveth of Christ alone. Even as one is called white of the whiteness that is in him, black of the blackness, great of his stature: so a Christian is called of Christ, whom he hath in himself, and of whom he receiveth that which is good. Now if one be named a Christian of Christ, he taketh not that name of his own works, whereupon it plainly also followeth, that no man is made a Christian by works. Which if it be true, as it is true and certaine, it shall follow that Orders and sects doe nothing pertain to the name of Christ, neither do make a Christian. Wherefore they which preach or teach in the Church, and ordaine precepts, works, and decrees, are deceivers, who albeit they pretend a Christian name, yet profit they nothing, for under the colour of that name they endeavour to burden and oppresse us with commandements and works. Of works, giving thy self to fasting and prayers, thou mayest be called abstinent and temperate, but by no means a Christian. For although thou didst lay all thy works together, yea and ioynedst the works of all other to thine, yet neither so hast thou Christ, neither art thou therefore called a Christian, Christ is a certain other more excellent thing, then either the law or mans tradition. He is the sonne of God, who is ready to give only, not to receive: when as I am such a one that I doe receive of him, I have him also, whom if I have, I am by good right called a Christian. Moreover, the Gospel preacheth Christ also to be the greatest and most highly exalted person in the world, not that he doth terrifie men, but that he poureth forth all earthly and heavenly good things, so that all men must trust in him, must have their hope reposed in him, and always receive only of him. If any thing terrifie me in my conscience, and the preachers of the law endeavour to help me with their works, they shall prevaile nothing with me. For then Christ alone can help and none beside him, yet others make the case worse, whether it be *Peter*, or *Paul*, or the

the blessed Virgine *Mary* her self the Mother of God. For Christ only performeth all things, who in his word declareth that if I believe, my sinne is forgiven me freely, without all both worke and merite, by pure grace through faith in Christ. Which word when I shall receive, I receive also comfort, that my sinnes be forgiven me as well before God as before men, and I therefore give thanks to God through Christ, which giveth the holy Ghost and his grace unto me, that sinne may not hurt me, neither here, nor in the last judgement. If I feare death, and would not die willingly, in this Christ I shall find comfort and remedie, that I shall not greatly passe for death. If because of the wrath of God I be afraid, he is my Mediatour. And to be briefe, he that hath not this Christ, the wrath of God alwaies remaineth over him, and in that state he standeth. Wherefore he that desireth to have a glad conscience, which is not afraid of sinne, death, hell, and the wrath of God, must take heed that he repose his trust in this Mediatour Christ. For he is a fountaine abounding with grace, which giveth both temporall and eternal life. Endeavour thou to think and feele him even in thy heart to be such a one, then shalt thou obtaine all things, for kee aboundeth and overfloweth, neither can he but give flow, and abound, if that thou canst beleve. Then also shalt thou be a right Christian, howbeit by receiving only of Christ, and not by giving. It is a very rich and precious word, which *Paul* prayseth so greatly, neither can he ever praise it sufficiently, whereby God so gently offereth his sunne, that he may poure forth his grace upon all, which doe not refuse to receive it. Hereupon it moreover followeth: If so be that a Christian doth good works, whereby he sheweth love to his neighbour, he is not therefore made a Christian or righteous, but he must needs be a Christian and righteous before. He doth good works indeed, but they doe not make him a Christian. The tree bringeth forth and giveth fruit, and not the fruit the tree. So none is made a Christian by works, but by Christ. Hereof now ye may understand, what kind of people Christians be, namely, that they be a companie which cleave unto Christ, and are of one spirit and gift with him. Hereupon it is that all Christians are alike, neither hath one more of Christ then another. Saint *Peter* is not better then the Theefe on the crosse: *Mary* the mother of God doth not excell *Mary Magdalen* the sinfull woman. There is indeed a difference in outward things and doings, so the worke of the holy Virgine *Mary* was greater, then the worke of *Mary Magdalen*: *Peter* had a greater worke then the Theefe, if thou consider the workes, but we are not therefore Christians. The holy Virgine *Mary* is not a Christian because of her great work, for that she did beare Christ so unspeakable a treasure in her wombe.

as Christ himself said to the woman; which cried unto him from among the people, Luke 11. *Blessed is the womb that beare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked: ye rather, saith he, blessed are they that beare the word of God and keep it.* In which place thou seest, that hee preferreth the faithfull even above his mother. For Christians doe therefore beare their name, because they beleewe in Christ. A virgin and a mother are two notable names, howbeit they are nothing, being compared to the true name of the faithfull. Wherefore we are all alike in Christ through faith, albeit S. Peter have a stronger faith then I, yet mine is as well faith in Christ as his. For the same Christ is offered of God the Father unto all companies and people, whom he that hath obtained, hath him whole, whether he be strong or weak, for that skilleth not. The woman mentioned in our text, which was troubled so many yeares with her disease, doth receive and apprehend Christ as well as the virgin Mary his mother. Wherefore there is one Christian spirit, one excelleth with another in the noblenes of birth, S. Peter is inferred to call me his brother, and I againe dare be bold to call him my brother. Yea Christ himself is touched with care of us, and counteth us for his brethren, as he said after his resurrection to Mary Magdalen, Iohn 20. *I ascend unto my Father and to your Father, and to my God and your God.* And St. Paul calleth Christ the first borne among many brethren. Whereof also he writeth excellently in the first Epistle to the *Corinthians* 8. 9. where intreating of false brethren, he speaketh thus: *Take heed lest by any means this power of yours be an occasion of falling to them that are weak. For if any man see thee which hath knowledge, sit at table in the idols temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak, be boldened to eate those things which are sacrificed to idols? and so through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died.* Now when ye sin so against your brethren, and wound their weak consciences, ye sin against Christ. Here thou seest, if a Christian be offended, or evill be done unto him, the same is done unto Christ. This therefore is the sum of the whole Gospel, that we may learne so to know Christ, that the name only do not remaine, but that we may know that all that we have, we have it from him. If we bee Christians, we have all things, then God is our father, and we are Lords of all both heavenly and earthly things, which is gotten of us by no worke be it never so great. Thou seest now how far they be from the name of Christ, which be under the Kingdome of the Pope. They that will preach the Gospel must preach nothing else, beside the only person, which is Christ, not Mary, so far must they be from preaching the Pope or any worke albeit precious, they must preach and offer Christ only unto us, and none beside him. When now he is preached unto thee as a Judge (as he shall come in the last day) and how

how that good workes are to be done of thee, for which thou mayest be rewarded of him, and thou shalt so receive it. Surely without all doubt he shall be unto thee a iudge and not a saviour. And if he be set forth unto thee, as he was wont to be painted, that his mother sheweth him her papes, that is properly to preach Satan and not Christ, who giveth only, and receiveth not. This is certaine, when thou shalt have received of him, then good workes doe flow forth of their own accord, being not compelled, as is set forth in this dayes Gospel: wherein moreover is declared that Christ preached the Gospel to the people: now it is not a common work to preach. For it is a great benefit unto us, that he is become our master and instructor, that he teacheth us by what meanes we may come to the knowledge of him, this is a part of his great goodnesse and grace. For as long as he was here in the earth, he ceased not to teach, that we might altogether receive him for the Messias and Saviour: and by his workes also did help and relieve every one, when the case so required. Thou findest no man in the Gospel, to whom help was denyed, or which at any time asked anything of the Lord, which was not given him. For how many soever went unto him, that were blind, deafe, lame, sick of the palse, had the drop sicke, he received all, and helped them all according to their desire, and healed them of all kinds of diseases, as *Luke saith: Luke 6. 19.* All the whole multitude sought to touch him, for there went vertue out of him, and healed them all. So doth he also to this woman. The woman heareth him preaching, and perceiveth him to be a bountifull and gracious man, which sheweth himself gentle to the whole world, whereupon she hath an affection both to love him, and to cleave unto him. For she maketh account, forasmuch as he putteth away none from him, that he would not deny her his goodnes, wherefore leaving all the Apostles, she casteth both her heart and confidence upon Christ alone, and thinketh thus with her self: If I may touch but the hemme of his garment, I shall be whole. She thought no other in her heart, but certainly he will help me, if so be that I shall touch his garment with mine hand, yet hath she not so good a courage, that she dare come before his face, she judged her self more unworthy, then that she might either talke with him, or looke upon him, for she knew that she had deserved nothing, and that she had bestowed no good thing upon the Lord, hereupon it is that she so beaveth her self, she cometh behind his back, she falleth down at his feet, and toucheth only the hemme of his garment. In a summe, here is nothing but meer bashfulness and want of merrit: here is no preparation, here is no worke, and yet the miserable woman promiseth her self much goodnesse from the Lord, namely that he would heale her. She had been diseased with an issue of blood twelve whole yeares,

what

what could she merit thereby? how could she therefore be worthy of any thing? Nevertheless being unworthy, and having merited nothing, the notwithstanding looketh for help of Christ, feeling herself to have great need thereof. And this is a true preparation, both to the grace and goodnesse of Christ, when I feele my self to stand in need thereof, and then doth it very well fall out, when these two come together, the rich and the poore, Christ and the sinner. But it is no small matter for men to be perswaded, that they are poore and stand in need of grace. For that cometh to passe very hardly, Satan also doth not suffer it, but alwayes draweth men back to workes, that they may not come so farre, as to think that they have need either of the grace or mercy of Christ. The text affirmeth that the Woman was diseased with an issue of blood, twelve whole yeares, and had spent all her substance upon Phisicians, and that the more medecines she took, the worse alwayes she was. *Luke* and *Marke* doe not a little exaggragate and amplifie it, whereby they both signifie, that the more workes be preached, so much the worse it is with us, and that there cometh nothing unto us thereby, but a continuall multiplying of our evill. Our conscience cannot be quieted with workes, for albeit some sinne be driven out of the conscience, forthwith there is another, yea the remedy and work oftentimes do make sin in us, where there is no sinne, until such time as we come to Christ, even as it was with this Woman, which had been sick so long, neither had she ever been helped, if she had not come to Christ, of whom she obtaineth health without any workes, giving him nothing, but receiveth only of him, and suffereth to be given unto her. Now here is also declared, how the word of God is dayly to be handled, and without ceasing to be urged, for there are as yet alwayes found such men, as have very troubled and afflicted Consciences. For this woman is a type or figure of all men, which are diseased with an issue, that is, which feele their sinne, the issue whereof doth alwayes runne, neither can it be stayed, for flesh and blood doth no otherwise, then it is carried with it own lust and desire. Now if that feeling of sinne be great, those wretches come forth and endeavour to help themselves, then one taketh this work in hand, and another that, and yet prevaile they nothing. From hence so many orders, so many Monasteries have sprung, hereupon so many and so great workes have been invented, that they are almost without number. What was the cause of all these? surely even the sinfull conscience. For we have thought to save our soules by these, and to be delivered wholly from all sinnes. But Christ was not there present, for we would give and not receive. Wherefore our case became alwayes worse, as it fell out also with this woman, who if shee had tried the help of all Phisicians, neither yet so could shee find whereby shee might be holpen. So we also beleeved

beleevd all phisitians, for whatsover every one brought, that we by  
 and by received. And was it any mervell? for we desired to be healed  
 and to have a glad conscience. The Phisitians are the preachers of the  
 Law: Now if any desired to be delivered from sinnes, what did they un-  
 to him? they gave him, wherereby he became only weaker and feeble,  
 which surely we have seene and felt to our great evill, namely, how  
 they would have men to be iustified by workes, and by them to be de-  
 livered from sinnes. But it profited nothing, for we were alwayes made  
 more weake against sinne and death, so that there is never found in  
 the earth a more desperate sort of people, then Sacrificing Priests,  
 Monkes and Vestall virgines, and they whatsover they be that trust  
 in workes: if there did but a little byle arise upon them, by and by they  
 must run to the Poticarie, then is such trying of medecine, such run-  
 ning and hast, as though they had now breathed their last. Neither is  
 any so afraide of the last iudgement as this people. Which then they ve-  
 ry well shew, when they so deale with workes, that they rest only upon  
 them, neither doe persevere constant in any worke, and the more  
 workes they doe, so much worse is their case, so much more are they  
 cast down in mind and become more desperate, so that it saileth out  
 with them as with this woman. It is a very goodly similitude, which  
 may most fitly be applyed to us: for we doe not only bestow temporall  
 good things, but our body also by fasting, chastising, and bearing other  
 hard & intollerable burdens, so that some have thereby become mad, &  
 destitute of all strength, yea and at the last lost their life. And I my  
 selfe have been such a one, and have without doubt more resorted to  
 medecines then many other, I could not attaine so farre, as to leave the  
 Popes Law. It seemed a hard and a forematter to me to eate flesh on  
 the fridays. O good God, how hard a thing was it to me, before I  
 durst attempt to doe that? Wherefore if any will be delivered from  
 such things, and contemne the traditions of the Pope, truly he must  
 have a strong foundation of faith, which if he shall not have, let him  
 looke about him againe and againe before he attempt it. For if faith be  
 wanting, it will fall out with us as with this woman, who had spent  
 all her substance upon Phisitians, amending nothing, but rather wax-  
 ing worse and worse: In like manner all our workes, labours and en-  
 deavours shall be lost, all our obedience, with all orders or religions,  
 and whatsover we have bestowed therein shall be in vaine. Howbeit  
 if we have faith, we shall at the last see the decrees of the Pope and  
 popish Bishops to be nothing, because of which before we trembled  
 and were troubled, all which did help us so much, as the Phisitians  
 did that good woman, which had bestowed all her substance and rich-  
 es, yea and her body also, that shee might be healed. How many kinds  
 of medecines and syrups thinke est if you did that woman use? how weak  
 feeble, and

and sick was she often times made with them? yea if she might have been healed, it may seem she would have taken any medicine, howbeit it profited her nothing, she was afflicted with her disease the space of twelve yeares. Now therefore is this miserable woman at the last helped? When she did light upon a man whose name is Christ, and put her hope and trust in him, she was healed. But who led her to that man? without doubt not the Physicians. For if our Preachers should preach Christ, the merchandize of the Pope together with his decrees would be nothing set by, but rather she heard it of some that was also restored to health, who told her without doubting, that there was a certaine man, whom his parents had named Iesus, which is a gentle and good man, which helpeth every one, and sendeth away none from him whom he helpeth not, and therefore is without doubt sent of God, that he may help all. Which the woman having heard she leaveth the Physicians, and maketh hast unto Christ. So also at this day it falleth out: Not Christ, but workes only are preached, do this or that, nevertheles it is spread among the people what Christ is, what we must look for of him, and that he alone must do all things without our workes or meritts. This report being heard, we follow him, and lay up these words in the depth of our hearts, we leave the Physicians, nothing regarding the Preachers of the law and workes, or their commandements and traditions, but run with all desire of heart to this man, which is Christ, saying to the Pope: If I must receive only of Christ, how unwisely have I dealt, that I have turned so much unto thee: farewell therefore O Pope, farewell ye beloved Bishops, I need no more your medicine, workes and meritts, precepts and lawes, ye have grieved me long enough with them, I have gotten one, which bestoweth upon me freely, whatsoever I paid full deare for unto you before: he giveth that unto me without workes and meritts, for which I was faine before to bestow my body, strength, and health, and yet could not obaine it. Fare ye well, I mind to come no more to you hereafter. Christians therefore are made, not by the degrees of the Pope, not by workes, nor by the ordinances of men, but by the grace and goodnesse of Christ. Wherefore if thou hast a disquieted and troubled mind and conscience, so that thou art afraid of sinne, dreadst death, or hast some defect otherwise, get thee to that man, and confesse what thou wantest, call upon him, then surely he will help thee: poure out thy heart before him as the the 62. Psal. saith, and say thus unto him, behold here is an empty vessell, which greatly needeth wherewith it may be filled, I beseech thee, O my Lord, vouchsafe to fill it, I am weak in faith, I pray thee to strengthen me, I am cold in charity, doe thou make me hot, and fervent, that my love may extend unto my neighbour, I have no firme faith, neither can I  
sometime

Sometime trust in God, O Lord help me, and encrease my faith and confidence: in thee have I reposed the treasure of al good things, I am poore, thou art rich, and therefore didst thou come, that thou mightest have mercy on the poore: I am a sinner, thou art righteous, yea I have abundance of sinnes, but in thee is al fulnes and grace. When thou shalt once have learned this, the Popes ordinances shall nor snare thee, by which thou getest nothing, but consumest al that thou hast, like as this woman did. Then wilt thou say? I will chose to my self him, of whom I may receive, unto whom I need not give any thing, The other Evangelists write concerning this Woman, that after she was healed, Christ perceived vertue to have gone out of him, and turned him about in the presse, and asked who had touched him, and that his Disciples made answer, that the multitude did throng and thrust him, but that the Lord would not be content with that answer, but said t some one hath touched me: for I perceive that vertue is gone out of me, I know that some one hath received something from me, All which the Lord therefore did, that the faith of the woman might be thankfull unto him, which he would therefore have made manifest before all the people, for that nothing is more acceptable unto him, then that we beleewe and trust in him, and also that the Lord might by this miracle confirm the faith of the Ruler. Wherefore *Marks* saith, that when the woman understood that the Lord knew of her, she feared and trembled, and came and fell down before him, and told him the whole truth, how it fell out with her: whereupon the Lord doth deliver her and saith: *Go in peace, and be whole of thy disease.* Were not these loving words? what great joy did the woman take here, when as Christ had dealt so bountifully with her? This joy and peace all they obtaine, which repose their whole hope and trust in Christ Jesus. Where this joy shall bee, forthwith workes must needs follow, which may shew forth this joy: as also the faith of this woman must needs come to light. For as soone as she had received of the Lord, she confessed before all the people, neither was she ashamed to declare, that she had received something of him, for which notwithstanding she had given nothing. Now, God requireth of us these works and this giving of thanks, to wit, that wee confesse and declare before all men such good things, grace and benefits, that others also may be brought unto him, and suffer a benefit to be bestowed upon them, as it was here done. Wherefore Christian life enforceth me to doe good unto others also, even as God through Christ hath done good unto me, but thereby am I not made a Christian as the woman here is not healed by her confession, for she was healed before any worke and confession, but after she had recovered her health, she confesseth Christ, and praiseth him even to the commodity and converting of others. We also inasmuch as we are Christians, doe so



live, that one helpeth and pleasureth another in what thing soever he is at any time able. And as this woman was healed before all works, so we must be made Christians before we doe any worke. As the Gospel is set before our eyes in this woman: so is it also set forth in the daughter of this Ruler. This chiefe ruler of the Synagogue, whom *Marke* calleth *Jairus*, had a strong faith and confidence, that Christ would raise up his daughter. For unlesse he had been of that mind concerning Christ, he had not come unto him, neither had desired such a thing of him which exceeded the power and strength of nature. Wherefore by this prayer he shewed his faith, which faith being perceived, the Lord could not but grant his desire, wherefore rising forthwith, he went with him, and in this going this history of the woman came to passe, which had been diseased of an issue of blood twelve yeares, as we have now heard. When therefore the Lord was entred into the Rulers house, he saw the minstrells and the multitude making noise, which were there according to the law of *Moses*, and did sound the trumpet and pipes as in our countie they ring the bells to gather the people together. But he commanded the multitude to goe forth, saying: *The child is not dead but sleepeth.* And they laught him to scorne and mocked him. Which giveth us to understand, that when it is preached, that Christ is he which saveth, that our works prevaile nothing, then the world cannot containe it self, but that it scorneth and mocketh, for it cannot be perswaded, that Christ doth help and succour, even as this people without all doubt said after this sort: Behold what an excellent Master and a goodly Physitian he is, what could he have holpen, which knoweth not yet, what it is to sleep, and what to be dead? This title must needs remaine to the Gospell in the world, that the preaching thereof is counted foolish and contemptible. For Satan cannot abide, that honour should be given to this Gospel before the world, for it bringeth but small commoditie to his kingdom, which forasmuch as he perceiveth full well, he praiseth all crafts and wiles, that he may either altogether hinder it, or at the least make it to prevaile little with them that be his, whose hearts he hath wholly blinded and possessed, that the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should not shine unto them, as *S. Paul* saith *2 Co. 4.* Neither yet can it be, that this preaching of Christ should not be fruitfull, forasmuch as it is not uttered in vaine: for albeit if he received but of a few, that doth not greatly skill. When therefore Satan perceiveth any thing to be taken from him, and that that preaching is ordained plainly against his kingdom, he doth without delay persueit, contemn it, and assaile it on every side, that even now he is fierce and ragerh in the whole world. For the Gospel of Christ overthroweth whatsoever the world and Satan delight in, & whatsoever to the world seemeth most holy & goodly. For the world imagineth to it self

self such a God, as hath regard to our good works, and will be pleased with the erecting of Masses and vigiles for them that are departed, with Rosaries, as they call them, habit, thaving, and whatsoever other trifles are used in the Papacie. Now if there come any which bringeth the Gospel, and enuicth against these vaine toies of the Pope, and saith that they are nothing worth, but are meer delusions, inasmuch as they are repugnant to Christ and the Scripture, he is counted a most wicked fellow, and therefore must be punished, he is reproached as an heretick and a seducer of the people: so that they burst forth into great words and say: wilt thou govern all the whole world? dost thou think thy self the wisest man that is? and were our fore fathers foolish and without all understanding? many holy men have done these works, and have preached of them, and wilt thou come and turn them all to nothing? thou shalt not doe it. Then rage and furie beginneth, yea persecution slaying and murdering, and the Devill will seem to have a just cause, howsoever the matter goeth. Thus much shall suffice at this time concerning this text. Now ye must take especiall heed, that out of the Gospels ye learn throughly, how all things consist in the only person, whose name is Christ, and lay up this in the depth of your heart, that a Christian hath his name of Christ. For I know how much it availeth both in tentation and in adversitie to hold that fast. Let us now by prayer call for the grace of God, that at the last we may with most earnest zeale and heartie affection imbrace true Christianity, Amen.

**The 32. Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, upon the Gospel on S. Thomas day, concerning the works which Christ hath wrought for us, wherein is contained a most sweet consolation against the law, sin, death, and Satan. [Iob. 20. Ver. 24. to the 29.]**

The sum of this Gospel. 1 Thomas doth not beleve that Christ is risen from the dead, but when he seeth and feeleth him. 2 The Disciples beleve not without manifest signs. But blessed are they that have not seen, but doe beleve the word only. 3 It is a great matter to know Christ God & man. He which attaineth to this knowledge of Christ, feareth neither sinne nor death, neither the devill nor hell: briefly he is quiet from all anguish and tentation. For he hath a greater & mightier then he which is in the world, as John saith in his first Epist. ch. 4.

The exposition of this Gospel. I Know nothing more certaine concerning S. Thomas, then that which this Gospel mentioneth of him. Other things which are written of him in the book of Legends, are most impudent lyes. And albeit they were partly true, yet have they no authority, neither make us any thing the better. Wherefore we will leave them untouched, & speak something of this Gospel, which shal be more profitable & necessary for us then all those legends. The former part of this Gospel fel out about the eventide of the Pasover, when two had returned from Emmaus, & shewed unto the other disciples, that the Lord was risen again. The latter part fel out

eight day after the Paschever. It is marvelous how comfortable this Gospel is, shewing unto you, the fruits of faith, namely peace and joy, as *Paul* saith *Rom. 5.* being justified therefore by faith, we have peace toward God, through our Lord Iesus Christ. But now we will intreat in few words, what this is that the Lord sheweth to his Disciples his hands and his feet, whereby is declared unto us, what commoditie wee have by Christ, wherunto he profiteth us, and what we must look for of him. It is ingrafted in the hearts of all men as it were by nature, to have a certain will to be honest and godly, and every one thinketh how he may come to salvation, whereby it hath come to passe, that one hath invented this thing, another that, being verily perswaded, that thereby he should make God favourable unto him, and obtain heaven, but none such at any time hath stood in the right way, forasmuch as all have had this drift, that they might procure Gods favour by deeds and good workes. Notable Doctors also and holy fathers, have written and taught many things, how we might attaine unto godlinesse. About this they have miserably troubled themselves, but as we see, and to our notable losse have felt, they have done little. Wherefore it is exceeding necessary, that some sound knowledge be had hereof, whereby we must endeavour to true godlinesse, forasmuch as it is a thing of no small importance. For he that is deceived here, loseth the sum and chiefe point of all Christianity: hereof therefore we must now speak somewhat. True and sound righteousness consisteth not in our own workes, but in the workes of another. Take an example hereof: One buildeth temples, another for religion sake goeth to *St. James*, to *Aquisgrane*, to *Rome*, to the holy sepulcher, the third pineth himself with fastings, prayeth, weareth a cowl, goeth bare foot, or worketh some other such worke whatsoever it be, these are our own workes, God hath not commanded them, but men and hypocrites, iustificiers of themselves have invented them, and have thought that they are precious good workes, and greatly esteemed of God, sweetly perswading themselves, that they are by them delivered from sinnes, and that God is pacified towards them. But these workes chosen of their own proper will, are nothing worth at all, neither can stand, forasmuch as they proceed not of faith, yea they are sinnes, as *S. Paul* saith *Rom. 14.* *Whatsoever is not of faith, is sinne.* These our workes therefore are defiled and uncleane in the sight of God, yea he doth abhorre and loath them. Wherefore if we will have to doe with God, we must not ascend trusting to our owne workes, but to the workes of another. But which are those workes of another, that are allowed of God? Truly the workes of our Lord Iesus Christ, whom God the father sent down from heaven, that by his death and passion he might satisfie for our sinners. This satisfaction fell out upon this occasion: We were subiect to great danger, grievous tyrants had power

over

over us, which day and night without ceasing did vex us. The law which God gave unto man, did urge us, and required many things of us, which we were not able to performe, and therefore it condemned us. Sinne also did lye upon us as a heauie burden which the law did ostentiously make greater and greater. Death went about to deuoure us, inasmuch as it is the wages of sinne, Satan also endeavoured to through us down headlong to hell, inasmuch as he would punish us for our sinnes committed; all things are full of trembling and anguish. God taking pittie upon this so great calamitie, sent his only begotten sonne, and that of his meer grace and goodnesse, without our desert, that he might deliver us out of so great tyranny, which he mightily did after this sort. He satisfied the law, and fulfilled it perfectly. For he loved God with all his heart, and with all his soule, and with all his strength, he loved his neighbour also as himself, in these the whole law and the Prophets do consist. Now whatsoever Christ did, it consisted in these two. Hee loved God, inasmuch as he obeyed his will, he took upon him the nature of man, and performed in all obedience those things that were enjoined him of the father, as *Paul* saith *Phil. 2. He became obedient to the father unto the death, even the death of the crosse*: Secondly, hee loved his neighbour: for all the workes which he did in the earth, tended unto this end, that he might thereby profit his neighbour, and therefore he so loved his neighbour, that he even died for him, as hee saith himself to his disciples *John 15. Greater love then this hath no man, when any man bestoweth his life for his friend*. *St. Paul* doth more set forth this, saying, for his enemies, when he writeth thus *Rom. 5. But God setteth out his love towards us, seeing that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*. For asmuch then as Christ hath so fulfilled the law, it could not accuse him, neither was sinne of any force with him. He set upon it, and did prevaile over it, and swallowed it up, it was inforced to be extinguished of him, no other wise then a sparke of fire in the most wide sea. For in him was nothing but mee righteousnes. Death also came, and went a bout to devour him, it devoured him indeed, but it could not digest him, it was inforced to yeeld him up againe, yea and this devouring was an utter discommoditie to death, for the case being quite altered, Christ devoured death it self. For it had set upon him, against whom it had no right, forasmuch as not a whit of sinne did appeare in him. Where siene is not, there death hath nothing to doe, as *St. Paul* saith *1 Cor. 15. The sting of death is sinne*, with this it killeth, otherwise it should be dull, and have no strength. Satan also made a triall of his strength in him, but in vaine, and to his own griefe, for he laid hands on him, with whom he had nothing to doe. The wretch was overcome in this conflict, and went away with shame, as Christ saith, *John 14. The Prince of this world cometh, and hath*

nought in me. Hell also did open his mouth, and would have devoured Christ, but contrariwise it was devoured of him. And so in this conflict the Law, Sinne, Death, Satan and hell were vanquished, over all which he triumphed and gloried with great pompe, as Paul sayth Col. 2;

All these things were not only done for our commoditie; but also if wee believe in this Lord Christ, they are given unto us. For whatsoever he hath, it serveth for us, yea he himself is ours, as Paul saith Rom. 8. *God spared not his owne sonne, but gave him for us all to death, how shall he not with him give us all things also?* So that I may boldly glory of all victory, which he obtained over the Law, sinne, death, the Devil, and may challenge to my self all his workes, even as if they were mine owne, and I my self had done them, so that I beleeeve in Christ. Otherwise his workes shall profit nothing at all, if they were not given unto me. These are the workes of another which doe commend us before God, and save us. Our owne workes, shall doe nothing, we are weaker, then that we can even resist the least sin, so farre is it of, that we are able to encounter with death, Satan, and hell. Wherefore when the Law shall come, and accuse thee, that thou doest not observe it, send it unto Christ, and say: There is that man which hath fulfilled the law, to him I cleave, he hath fulfilled it for me, and hath given his fulfilling unto me; when it heareth these things, it will be quiet. If sinne come, and would have thee by the throat, send it unto Christ, and say: As much as thou mayest doe against him, so much right shalt thou have against me: For I am in him, and he is in me. If death creep upon thee, and attempt to devoure thee, say unto it: Good Maistres death, doest thou know this man? come and bite out his tooth, hast thou forgotten how little thy byting prevailed with him once? go to if it be a pleasure unto thee, encounter with him againe. Thou hadst perswaded thy self, that thou shouldest have prevailed somewhat against him, when he did hang between two theeves, and dyed an ignominious death, which was counted cursed both before God and the world. But what didst thou gaine thereby? Thou didst bite indeed, but it turned worst to thy self. I pertaine to this man, I am his, and he is mine, and where he abideth, there also will I abide. Thou couldest hurt him nothing, wherefore also let me alone. After the same sort, if the Devil, if hell, come violently upon thee, and trouble thee, send them unto Christ, and thou shalt easily make them to cease.

And thus you see what Christ is unto us, namely such a man as is given unto us of God, that he might extinguish sins, vanquish death, destroy hel, overcome the Devill, and all these for our commoditie. If he had not done this, nor given unto us these things, we had been for ever under the curse of the law, under sin, under death, under the devill, and under hell, God delivered us from these by that Christ. Wherefore St.

*Paul*

Paul saith out of the Prophet Hosea. 1 Cor. 15. Death is swallowed up into victory. O death where is thy sting? O hell where is thy victory? The sting of death is sinne, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be unto God, which hath given us victory through our Lord Iesus Christ. Hereof we may easily understand, what kind of works those be, which doe make us intire and righteous before God. Surely they are the works of another, and not our own works chosen of our selves. Wherefore the whole Papacie falleth here, with all the most precious and holy works thereof, which hath this drift only, that miserable, wretched, and blinded men may be perswaded, that they obtaine heaven by their meritts, and their own works. Hereupon have sprung so many orders, that they cannot almost be numbred, of which one strived to be howlier then another, according as they exercised harder, greater, and weightier works. But this their miserable labour, anguish, prayer, fastings, chastising of the body, and such like, were vaine workes, and of no value at all, neither had they so much power, that they were able to take away so much as even the least sinne, which they call veniall. They were altogether unmindefull of this saying *Esay* 29. which the Lord repeareth *Mar.* 15. *This people draweth neer unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vaine they worship me, teaching such doctrines, as are nothing else but the precepts of men.* Hereupon now thou mayest gather with thy self, that all holy men although they be exceeding holy, yet doe obtaine salvation, not by their own holiness, meritts or works. And not so much as *Mary* her self the mother of God, was made righteous and holy in respect of her virginity, or in that she was the mother of God, but salvation hath come unto all by Iesus Christ, as by the works of another. Wherefore this is diligently to be noted, that our felicity doth not consist in our own works, but in the works of another, namely of Christ Iesus our Saviour, which we obtain through only faith in him. This also the history of the Gospel seemeth to signifie, when as the Lord sheweth to his disciples, but especially to *Thomas*, his hands & feet. By which deed he declareth, that it was necessary that those hands & feet should do these things, and that no other works, that is, their own, & not the works of another, do pertain unto salvation. For in the Scriptures by hands and feet, works and conversation are signified. These hands & feet Christ doth as yet eftsoons shew unto us and saye Behold, I am that only man, whose works & conversation are of force with God, thou shalt labour in vain with thine own works, thine owne righteousness maketh nothing hereunto, it hath another end. If thou be righteous, it is profitable to thee among men, here in earth thou hast the glory & praise thereof, as Paul saith *Rom.* 4. But before God this thy righteousness is of no estimation, thou must set in place thereof another, namely

namely mine, this God my father doth allow. For I have delivered thee from sinnes, death, the devill, hell, and from all evill, thou shouldest never have escaped out of these by thine own power, but hadst lain as yet most deeply drowned in them. I have appeased the wrath of God, and of an angrie Iudge, have made him, a gentle, mercifull, and gracious father, beleve this and it goeth well with thee, thou art then safe, intire, and righteous. Beware that thou presume not to deale before God with thine own workes, but if thou wilt doe any thing with him, creep into me, put on me, and thou shalt obtaine of my Father, whatsoever thou desirest and askest, as he himself saith unto his disciples Iohn 16. *Verily, verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall aske the father in my name, he will give it you.* Wherefore as from the beginning sinne which was anothers, hath been derived unto us from Adam, for neither I, nor thou have eate of the apple: so also by the righteousness of another we must be restored unto righteousness and integrity. This other is Christ Iesus, by whose righteousness and workes we are all saved, as I have now sufficiently declared. This *St. Paul* hath very pithily comprehended even in one sentence, where 1 Cor. 1. he saith thus: *Christ Iesus is made unto us of God wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, that according as it is written, he that rejoyceth, let him rejoyce in the Lord.* And Rom. 4. he saith: *Iesus Christ was delivered to death for our sinnes, and is risen again for our iustification.* In these two little sentences are briefly comprised, and ioyned together, whatsoever things we must look for from Christ. Howbeit all these things are injoynd by faith, for he that is without faith, to him they are impossible to be comprehended, yea they are counted foolishnesse to reason, and to the world, as *Paul* saith. 1 Cor. 1. *Christ unto the Iewes is ever a stumbling block and unto the Grecians, foolishnesse,* that is, when Christ is preached, that he is our righteousness, that salvation cometh unto us by him, and that by him we are made the children of everlasting life, without our own workes and righteousness, then those holy men, and iustificers of themselves are offended, no otherwise then the *Jewes*. Moreover to the prudent and wise men of this world, it seemeth foolishnes and a certain ridiculous thing, that a man being fastned to the crosse and put to death, doth performe these things. Whatsoever therefore is counted righteous, holy, wise and prudent in the eyes of the world, it is offended and stumbleth at this Christ. But, *Paul* saith moreover. *Vnto them which are called, both of the Iewes and Grecians, we preach Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.* He saith also Rom. 1. *The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that beleveth, to the Iew first and also to the Grecian. For by it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith as it is written Haba. 2. The iust shall live by faith.* Wherefore



fore the Lord saith very well to the Disciples of *Iohn*: *Blissed is he that shall not be offended in me.* So thou seest now plainly, that this faith which we have in Christ, cometh by the preaching of the Gospel, as *Paul* affirmeth *Rom. 10. Faith is by hearing and hearing by the word of God.* Here, here I say doth all the force consist, by the word of God, not by the word of man. The word of God doth these things, not when we publish indulgences, or preach of workes, as hitherto (alms) it hath been done, to our exceeding losse, as well in the good things of the body, as of the soule: We made no account of goods which we bestowed plentifully, unlesse we had afflicted our body with fastings, chastisement, pilgrimages, and such like trifles. Indeed these things had been to be granted and borne, if they had not with a false confidence in such doing, so miserably and lamentably led us away and seduced us from a true faith and confidence in God through Christ. But praise be unto God, that we have for the most part perceived such delusions. For the world was so full of this miserie and preaching, that it did almost overflow, which surely came by the vengeance and wrath of God, for that we contemned his word, and followed mens fables, yea our own wits and opinions. Then we were in so great blindnesse, that we did almost without difference beleve every man, what kind of worke soever he brought and gloriously set forth. From these deceitfull follies our consciences are now delivered and set free, but no man doth so much as once give thanks to God therefore. If we shall be contemptuously negligent, a more grievous miserie shall light upon us then this was. Neither should that come unto us undeservedly, forasmuch as we doe greatly procure these evils against our selves by our unthankfulness. When as before we gave with so great abundance and plenty, that by our liberality they were made almost Lords of the world, now hardly six or seven poor men are maintained in a City, yea now the minister of a Parish Church hath not sufficient wherewith to live. Howbeit do not impute this perverse kind of living to the Gospel, as our adversaries now impudently doe. It is not meet, that thou suffer thy poor neighbour by thee to need: Yea rather the whole Gospel doth specially urge this, that thou have a care of thy neighbour, and that thou be serviceable toward him, that thou help him both with thy counsell and substance, even as God hath holpen and instructed thee.

Such a one without doubt he that is indued with true faith sheweth himself: for he bursteth forth, and behaveth himself so toward others, as he hath tried God towards himself, and as he desireth to be done to himself, if he were pressed with poverty, anguish and necessity. God needeth not our good works, our prayers, fastings, and buildings of temples, founding of Masses, do displease him, he requireth not our sacrifices, but rather as *Esa* saith, hateth and abhorreth them. He is content



content with this one thing, that we acknowledge him before our God, trust in him, give him thanks, as he saith Psal. 51. *Heare, O my people, and I will speak, I my self will testifie against thee O Iſraell: For I am God even thy God. I will not reprove thee, because of thy sacrifices, or for thy burnt offerings: because they were not alway before me. I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor be goates out of thy fold. For all the beasts of the furrest are mine, and so are the catrells upon a thow and hills. I know all the foules upon the mountaines, and the wild beasts of the field are in my sight. If I be hungrie, I will not tell thee: for the whole world is mine and all that is therein. Thinkest thou that I will eate bulls flesh, and drink the blood of goates? Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vowes unto the most higheſt. And call upon me in the time of trouble, so will I deliver thee, and thou shalt praise me.* But God sendeth us downward with our works to our neighbours, to the miserable, afflicted, and them that be void of comfort. It is our parts to help them, to comfort them, to teach and instruct them. And whatsoever benefit we shall bestow upon them, that we shall bestow upon God and his Christ, as he shall say in the last day *What so ever ye have done unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.* Thus ye now have heard, that we are justified and made righteous by the works of another, namely, by the works of Christ, which we enjoy only by faith: the same faith charity doth naturally accompany, whereby we do so to our neighbour, as we do acknowledge that God hath done unto us. Hereof ye have elsewhere heard more: Here we will now make an end and call for the grace of God. **The 33. Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, upon the Gospel on S. Mathias day.** [Matth. 11. Verse 25. to the 30.] At that time Iesus answered, &c. The sum of this Gospel. 1. Reason is not capable of the Gospel. For as Paul 1 Cor. 2. saith The naturall man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishnesse unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. *Wherefore when reason seeketh salvation in worldly wisdom and foolishnes, it findeth not.* 2. Christ calleth them children here, which trust not to their own wisdom and righteousness, but do beleve only. 3. As children only do obtain salvation, so the Father also cannot be known, unlesse he be revealed by Christ: that is, our wisdom doth not know God the father. But when as through faith we are taught & instructed in bearing the crosse, then the power of God becometh known unto us. Therefore also he afterward comforteth them, upon whom the crosse is laid, saying: *My yoke is easie and my burden light.* The Exposition of the Text.

**T**HIS text toucheth as it were, the very pith & marrow of the Gospel. Other places of Scripture wherein the miracles and doings of Christ are rehearsed, have not so much comfort as those in which those

sermons

sermons of Christ to the people are contained, wherein he doth so lovingly reach us, and allure us to himself. I am not so certain of the favour, which I see shewed to others in working miracles, as if I have the plain words before mine eyes. It is a far greater comfort also unto me, to heare such loving admonitions and allurements, then the preaching of miracles: Albeit they also confirm my faith, and are examples, that, as he hath holpen them, so also he will help me. Moreover this Gospel intreateth of the knowledge of God the father, & of Christ his son, shewing also wherof such knowledge doth consist. Now that the meaning therof may be well known, it is requisite to understand aright these two words, wise men, and children or babes. But lest when we heare it: we say this pertaineth nothing to us, it is spoken to others, as the Jewes said to the Prophets, which referred all things to the Gentiles, the words going before do sufficiently shew, unto whom, or of whom these words of Christ are spoken. For before he speaketh of them that condemn the Gospel, not vouchsafeing to embrace it, whose duty notwithstanding especially was to embrace it, inasmuch as they would seem alone to be them, that were occupied in the word of God, and were to be counted for the people of God. Of such he saith thus: *Wherunto shall I liken this generation? it is like unto little children which sit in the markets, and call unto their fellows, and say: we have piped unto you, and ye have not danced: we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.* Which the Lord applyeth to himself, and unto John the Baptist: as if he would say: we have preached unto you the Gospel: John with a certain severity and austerity, but I with very great clemencie and gentleness. But ye contemn our preaching and will not receive it, ye shall as the last feel without doubt to your great evill; what it is to despise the word of God. This is very true, howsoever thou preachest to the people, whether thou be fair spoken or severe, gentle or ungentle, they will always seem to have some cause or other to complain of thee. These the Lord calleth here wise, and men of understanding, to these the Gospel is hid. He meaneth not here those wise men which are truly wise in divine matters. For it is a great commendation, if one bee worthy to be called wise and prudent. True wisdom is nothing else but the knowledge of God, to wit, when as I know what we must think of God, and do understand his will. But prudence signifieth ability and knowledge to iudge of worldly things, what is right or wrong, which Paul often joyneth together, especially in his Epistle to the Ephesians chapter 1. and in his Epistle to the Colossians chapter 1. Of such wisdom Christ speaketh not here, but of worldly wisdom, which puffeth up men, and excludeth the true wisdom of God. We are all of this disposition by nature, eftsoons to rise against the wisdom of God. That is called good, by the instinct of humane wisdom, which bringeth pleasure, honour, and profit, but those things that are contrary to these,

as affliction, dishonour, losse, these are called evil. For mans nature can seek nothing else at all, but those things that are his own, that which pleaseth and profiteth him, that he doth, especially like: But that which displeaseth him, he counteth the worst of all things, although it be the best. Wherefore as I have said, the Lord speaketh here of those wise and prudent men, with which their own wisdom strive against the wisdom of God. Worldly wisdom seemeth to it self to be so great, that it is not content to rule only these worldly and temporal things, but taketh also upon it self to have the oversight of heavenly things; it alwaies searcheth out and imagineth some new things, even in spirituall and divine matters. So mans own wisdom hath invented shaven crownes and cowles, and almost all that, wherein the Papacie consisteth; every one hath chosen his proper work to himself, this man hath invented this, another hath invented that, and if this be not abolished, and doth not greatly please, by and by they find out some other thing, as (alas) we have seen, and do as yet see, neither is there any measure in these trifles, whereupon it cometh, that we can hardly away with the word of God and the truth, but are alwayes delighted to invent some new thing. For truly this is certaine, as often as we ordaine a new worship of God contrary to the word of God, wee are by and by blinded, and fall from error to error, then which calamitie none greater can come unto us. Wherefore Paul. *2 Thes. 2.* saith: *Therefore God shall send them strong delusion, that they should beleev lies, that all they might be damned which beleevd not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousnesse.* Yea and at the last they become so blind, that they understand nothing at all of God, as it is in the *14. Psal* *The foole hath said in his heart, there is no God.* For it cannot be that the naturall man, which consisteth of flesh and blood, and is not instructed by the spirit of God, should iudge and understand those things which are of God, as Paul. *1 Cor. 2.* witnesseth: *The naturall man perceiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishnesse unto him: neither can he knowe them, because they are spiritually discerned.* He which will read more hereof, let him peruse the first chapter of the Epistle of Paul to the Romans; there shall he plainly enough perceive what blindness is, and what punishment doth insue, if the word of God being neglected, we follow our own inventions and counsell. All which we see in our spirituall Monkes, Nunnes, and sacrificing Priests, and doe too truly try it. God grant they may at the last repent, and give unto God his glory. S. Paul saith there of the Gentiles, that they turned the glory of the incorruptable God to the similitude of the image, not only of a corruptable man, but also of birds, and foure footed beasts, and of creeping things. So doe our Papists also, yea and much more foolishly and madly then the Gentiles: for they make unto themselves

themselves a god which is delighted with a shaven crowne, with cowles, with eating of flesh and fish, &c. Wherefore God hath given them up through their hearts lusts unto uncleannesse, as he did the Gentiles, and that so filthily, that it is better to conceale it, then to rehearse it. For if such filthy and wicked things were committed among the Gentiles, which had many wives and many Concubines, what would not the spirituall men commit, which have forbidden the use of women and matrimonie? Briefly, sois it wont to come to passe, where Satan beareth the sway, and the word of God is wrested to serve mens affections, which every man may assuredly perswade himself to be so, yea these things are so known and undoubtably true, that children in the streets speak and sing of them. Now this is not to be understood of spirituall men only, but even the vulgar sort and common multitude doe live so, when the word of God is not admitted. As we see Citizens to utter counterfeit wares, Merchants to deceive in selling merchandice, and so many craftie practises, so many deceits in subtile dealing, so much regard of ulurie & private profit, that it cannot be rehearsed. As yet they endeavour again to bring in the Masse, to offer up their tapers, &c. being perswaded that God is pacified with such trifles, revolving this only in their minds, that their fame may remaine untouched and unhurt in the world, howsoever they agree with God. Of such wise and prudent men Christ speaketh here in the Gospel, which hear the Gospel indeed, and see miracles, but it profiteth them nothing, forasmuch as their heart is not touched. Now Christ saith thus: Verse 25. *I give thee thanks O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and men of understanding, and hast opened them unto children:* Verse 26. *It is so, O Father, because thy good pleasure was such.* Christ speaketh not here of very children: there may be some notable doctor, whom he calleth a child in this place. Contrariwise there may be a rusticall fellow, whom he calleth here wise and prudent. In the 8. Psal. David also calleth these infants and children, when he saith: *Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies.* They surely by whom God ordaineth strength against his enemies, which should extoll his glory through the whole world, were not babes or children in very deed. Those therefore the Lord calleth children here, which count their own workes for nothing, attribute nothing to their own wisdom, make nothing of themselves, but think God only to be wise and of understanding. Wherefore they are humble and lowly, and how great soever they are, doe submit themselves to God, of whom only they suffer themselves to be taught. Now other be overwise, and will learne nothing of God, yea they presumptuously take to themselves judgement and censure over the doctrine and works

of

of God, whereof thou mayest read in the first and second chapter of the Epistle to the Corinthians. Wherefore Christ saith Luke, 16. *The children of this world are in their generation wiser then the children of light.* But the foolish children of light are of greater estimation before God, then the wise children of this world. Of these children the Lord speaketh : *Thou hast hid them from the wise and men of understanding, and hast revealed them to Babes.* For the wise and prudent know not these things, but the children and fooles know them. How cometh it to passe that the wise know them not? because thou hast hidden them from them. How doe the children know them? because thou hast revealed them. What he meaneth hereby, we may gather of those things that were spoken before, to wit that he had preached the Gospell of the Kingdome of God in many Cities of Iudea, as in *Chorazin, Bethsaida,* and in his owne City *Capernaum,* which cities their own wisdom being a hindrance and let unto them, did not receive the foolish preaching of the Gospell. The Gospell is a good and ioyfull message, which teacheth me to know the glory of God, by which knowledge I obaine pardon of my sinnes, and life eternall : As Christ saith to his Father in the Gospell of Iohn chap. 17. *This is life eternal, that they know thee to be the only very God, and Iesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* He saith also in this Gospell : *No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father but the Sonne, and he to whom the Sonne will reveale him.* Here he speaketh of the knowledge both of the Father and of the Sonne. To whom this is revealed, he knoweth, and obtaineth eternall life. But the Father hath hid these things from the wise and prudent, that they may not know neither the Father nor the Sonne, and hath revealed them to children, they have the knowledge both of the Father and the Sonne, and so doe obtaine everlasting life. Moreover, if these things be thus, as they be indeed, what shall become of free will? Seeing thou seest such hanius and wicked things to be committed in the Bodyes, as it is written Rom. 7. *goe thy wayes now,* and glory of free will. But this is a goodly free will, to live in such a filthy life, which is altogether unworthy of a man, which is unknown even among Beasts that are without reason. How best it is wont so to come to passe, when God forsaketh us. As soon as we are forsaken of God, by and by Satan cometh, and erecteth his kingdom in us, wherein nothing els but such wickednesses are committed, which notwithstanding are so craftily coloured, and commended with such a pretence of honesty, that it seemeth to be a most holy, yea and an angelike life, What I pray you can mans strength doe here? wherby some go about to bring to passe many things, sweetly perswading themselves that they shall ascend up into heaven thereby. But thou hearest here that Christ affirmeth, that the Father doth

doth reveale these things: also that it is the good pleasure of the Father that it should be so. Whereby truly he taketh away all the merits of man, here no satisfactions profit, here is no respect of workes, it is done by the will and good pleasure of the Father. For he respecteth not the person, as it appeareth before the world. He doth not condemn and reject the sinner, albeit he come laden with sinnes. After the same sort Christ saith to his Disciples Luke 12. *Fear not little flock for it is the Fathers pleasure to give you the Kingdom.* This the hypocrites and justiciaries cannot abide, yea they are driven unto fury, senselesnes, and madnes, when they see simple receivers of custome and very publicans to goe before them into the kingdom of Heaven, they themselves with their holines, and goodly & plausible workes to the world, being excluded: Whom would not this drive unto madnesse? who would not take it grievously, that he himself and his things should be in such a case, and nothing at all counted of? But what shouldest thou doe, to what shouldest thou murmur? The good pleasure of God is such, to whom he vouchsafeth to open, to him they shall be opened: and from whom he hideth, from him they are hidden, which count as undoubtedly true: and marke well that Christ saith here, *It is so, O Father, because thy good pleasure was such, thy good pleasure I say, before the world was made, as S. Paul sayth Ephes. 1. God hath bestowed in Christ, before the Foundations of the World were laid, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, who hath predestinate us, to be adopted through Iesus Christ in himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the prayse of the glory of his grace, wherewith he hath made us freely accepted in his beloved.* Here all merit is excluded, wherefore let it not come into thy mind, that thou shalt obtaine anything here, by thy desarts, nether let thy workes, wisdom, and merits puffe thee up. Here all rejoycing is taken away, that he that rejoyceth, may rejoyce in the Lord, as Paul sayth 1. Cor. 1. It followeth moreover in the Gospel: *Vers. 27. All things are given unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Sonne but the Father: neither knoweth any man the Father but the Sonne, and he to whom the Son will reveale him.* Here thou seekest the safety, which is in the Kingdom of Christ by whom we have knowledge and light. If therefore Christ holdeth all things in his hand, and hath power over all things as the Father hath, no man can pluck anything out of his hands, which he himselfe also witnesseth in Ioh. 10. 28. *I give eternall life to my sheep, and they shall never perishe, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand: my Father which gave them me, is greater then all, and none is able to take them out of my Fathers hand. I and my Father are one.* Wherefore every Christian, when he hath received the Gospel, may worthily rejoyce, that he is now under the tuition of Christ, and is not any thing troubled because of his sinnes, If he had embraced the Gospel, Christ under whom

whom he fighteth will guide the matter excellently well. Satan indeed will tempt him with this and that vice, as, with adulterie, whooredome, theft, slaughter, envie, hatred, wrath, and otherlike finnes. But let him not therefore be discouraged, he hath a King, that is strong and mighty enough, of whom he shall be easily defended. Notwithstanding it will be very hard to stand strongly, and nothing to yeeld, wherefore prayer in this case is very needfull, others also may by their prayers intreat for thee, that stout courage and manly heart may be given unto thee, to withstand Satan. But it is certaine, that thou shalt not be destitute, Christ will easily preserve thee, be not disquieted in minde, let it only be thy care, that thou fallst not from his Kingdom. Moreover in this Gospell thou seest, that Christ is both God and Man: Man, inasmuch as he prayeth God, and giveth him thanks: God, inasmuch as all things are given unto him of the Father. Which ought to be great comfort unto us in all things that doe trouble and afflict us. Whereas he saith: *No man knoweth the Sonne but the Father: neither knoweth any man the Father but the Sonne, and he to whom the Sonne will reveale him:* he in these words overthroweth free will, which will know God and Christ, when and how it pleaseth it. Here thou hast plainly, from whence the knowledge of God & of Christ is: the Father, saith he, knoweth the Son, and the Son the Father, but how doe we know, by this or by that preacher? no truly, these are only certain middle instruments, but he only knoweth to whom the Sonne will reveale. A little before he said that the Father doth reveale or open, here he attributeth the same to the Sonne. Surely both the Father and the Sonne doe reveale, and as the Father revealeth, so also doth the Sonne: and Christ also sayth in John chap. 14. *The holy Ghost shall teach you all things. Wherefore as the Father teacheth, so teacheth the Sonne, likewise also teacheth the holy Ghost.* And where God the Father, and the Sonne, and the holy Ghost doe not teach, there all things remaine void of knowledge. It followeth moreover in the Gospell. *Vers. 28: Come unto me all ye that are weary and laden, and I will refresh you. Vers. 29. Take my Yoke on you, and learne of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall finde rest unto your soules. Vers. 30. For my Yoke is easie, and my burden is light.* Hitherto we have heard how the Lord dealeth with the wise and prudent, namely that he blindeth them, and hideth the Gospell from them. Likewise how he is delighted in Children and simple ones, to wit, that he endueth them with right knowledge of himself, and openeth the Gospell unto them. But some man may here say and complaine: If the matter be so, surely my conscience shall be in great danger, before I heare and know that the Gospell doth pertaine unto me. I am a wretched sinner and perhaps the Gospell pertaineth not unto me, what if I be unworthy? Christ, he that may comfort



comfort these weak, dismayed, and troubled consciences, saith: *Come unto me all ye that are wearie and laden, and I will refresh you.* Here are we called unto comfort. Here forget all thy merit and worthines, for that he plainly saith: *ye that are wearie and laden*, to wit, with the burden of the law, the anguish and affliction of sinne, and wherewithall soever the conscience may be troubled. Therefore he doth not expresse it by name: for he saith not, ye that are troubled with this or that calamitie, but simplicie, ye that are wearie and laden. Neither will he have any here excluded, forasmuch as he saith, *All*, which is a singular and speciall comfort, if any thing trouble us, what kind of temptation soever it be. Whosoever therefore is stricken with the feeling of his sinne, and knoweth his own weaknesse to fulfill the law of God, let him come hither with a cheerfull and bold courage, and hee shall certainly receive comfort. I will refresh you saith Christ, as those that are pressed and burdened with sore labour and griefe. Let this onely be thy care, that thou beleeve such a loving bidding and promise. After this sort Christ cried in the temple at Hierusalem at a certaine feast: *If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drinke. He that beleeueth in me, as saith the Scripture, out of his belly shall flow rivers of water of life. This spake he of the Spirit, which they that beleeved in him should receive.* Io. 7. 37, 38, 29. Which so cometh to passe: he causeth the Gospel to be preached unto us, which he that beleeueth, is indued with the holy Ghost, and obtaineth pardon of all his sinnes. This is truly to refresh him, whose conscience is troubled, to wit, when he feelth that his sinnes be forgiven, and that he is become heire of the kingdom of God. Neither doth he refresh us only in the anguish and temptation of sinne, but he will also be present with us in other calamities and miseries, in famine, war, dearth of victuals, and whatsoever such like can come, in all these he will not leave us destitute of his help, as he cared for the Patriarch *Ioseph*, even in a strange Country, with whom hee was continually present, as well in prosperitie as in adversitie. Now sin is a grievous burden, wherof no man is eased, but he whom Christ the sonne of God delivereth, and that by the holy Ghost, whom hee hath merited for us of the Father, which maketh our hearts cheerfull, and ready to doe all things which God requireth of us. But what is this that he saith? *Take my yoke on you.* Is this to refresh, if I take one burden from one, and lay upon him another? This is that, wherof we have oftentimes spoken, the Gospel doth first make astonied and discourage, and is grievous to the flesh, for it telleth us that all our own things are nothing, that our own holines and righteousness are of no importance, that all things which are in us are damned, that we are the children of wrath and indignation. This is very hard, and an intollerable burden to the flesh, and therefore he calleth it a burden



or yoke. But lest he should terrifie or make afraid any, for that he is of great authoritie, high, and mightie, and therefore cannot suffer sinfull and wretched men, or for that he may seem to be tyrannicall and ungentle, he before cutting of this suspition, saith: *Learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart.* Christ will here lovingly allure us to his doctrine, for he had spoken before of the knowledge of the father, as if he would say, *flesh and I a fearefull nature counteth me for an austere, severe and rigorous man, but I am not of such a nature, yea I am humble and meek in heart.* I doe not terrifie men as *Moses* doth, I doe not preach, doe this or that, but I preach forgiveness of sinnes: neither doe I preach that they should give any thing, but rather that they may receive. There is not in me ambition and lofines, as is in the *Pharises*, which desire to be magnified, but I am altogether gentle, and lowly in heart, ready to receive sinners. If so be that they fall again into sinnes, notwithstanding I doe not yet cast them from me, if they flie unto me for succour and doe with a sure confidence, look for comfort and help of me. I doe not curse men as the *Pharises* doe, which curse them even for their own ordinances, and for mens devices, and will sooner suffer all the commandements of God to be neglected, then one of their decrees and ordinances not to be observed. As we see in the *Papacy*, where it is counted a greater offence to eat flesh on *Friday*, or for a sacrificing Priest to marrie, then to commit twentie adulteries, or ten homicides. But here thou seest, that even God doth abrogate even his own law, that he may so much the sooner procure sinners unto him. Christ in a singular signification saith here, that he is meek, as if he said, I know how sinners are to be handled, I have tryed what a fearefull and an afflicted conscience is, as the Epistle to the *Hebrewes* chap. 5. 10, witnesseth. That he was in all things tempted in like sort except sinne. Wherefore let no man be afraid of me, I will handle all easily and gently, I will say nothing with a sower countenance, I make no man afraid so as they come boldly unto me, they shall find rest to their soules with me. To their soules he saith, as if he would say: Outwardly in the body there may be affliction, and trouble, and calamities may overwhelm you, but you ought to beare all these things lightly, as he also saith to his disciples in the Gospel of *Iohn*, *In me you shall have peace, but in the world you shall have affliction*: Wherefore although outwardly, all things fall out against us as though, they would suppress and devour us, yet are they nothing to be esteemed of: For we have the feeling of peace inwardly in our conscience. And this is the first fruit of faith, as *Paul* saith *Rom. 5. Therefore being iustified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Now when our conscience is quieted, and we have peace with God, nothing is able to move us, no nothing shall hurt us, albeit,

albeit, it be evill and against us. Let no man think thus and say, this is not to amend ones state or case, if I take one burthen from his neck, and lay on another, as it is before said. For Christ saith, *My yoke is easie and my burthen is light*, as if he would say, the yoke of the law, under which ye lived before was grievous to be borne, but my burthen is not so grievous, it is light and tollerable, ye may easily beare it. Our wisemen say now, that the yoke of Christ is more grievous, then the yoke of the law was: and they alledge the 5. chap. of *Matth.* but Christ doth there interpret the law, how it ought to be understood, he doth not make lawes, but saith that murders and adulteries proceed from an evill and uncleane heart. And so he doth only expound the law of *Moses*, and prescribeth not any lawes there. But the yoke of Christ is therefore easie, and his burthen light, because he taketh away not only ceremoniall and mans lawes, but even the whole law, the curse, sinne, death, and whatsoever may come unto us from the law, all this Christ taketh away from me, and indueth me with his spirit, by the motion and instinct thereof I doe gladly, willingly, and with pleasure performe all the duties of the law. It is therefore also called easie, sweet, and light, for that he himself helpeth us, and taketh part of the burthen, if we be not of strength sufficient. It appeareth indeed grievous and intollerable to the world, but it is otherwise when there is one ready to ease the burthen. It is a common saying: it is good to sing with a fit companion, you two will easily beare the burthen, although one alone were not of strength sufficient to beare it, thus much shall suffice for the exposition of this Gospel. **The 34. Sermon of Dr. Martin Luther, upon the Gospel on the feast of St. Philip and James.** [*Iohn 14 Verse 1. to the 14.*] *Iesus said unto, &c.*

The summe of this Gospel. 1. In this Gospel is contained a comfort against offence that tempteth us through the crosse and persecution.

2. Without the meritt of Christ no man commeth to glory. Therefore he saith: In my Fathers house are many dwelling places. For many are elect from everlasting of God the Father, which notwithstanding cannot come unto glory without Christ.

3. The Disciples beleaved in Christ yet did they not understand, that he should come unto glory by death. Wherein we must marke, that faith being imperfect in the Apostles and Disciples of Christ, is a comfort unto us, if we rest upon the foundation Christ.

4. In Philip we see a very grosse faith, for he will see and know by experience. Wherefore Christ saith: If ye will not beleieve my words, at the last beleieve the workes, that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.

5. These words: I say unto you, he that beleeverth in me, the workes that I doe, he shall doe also, &c. shew that Christ shall raigne in us, when he is glorified with the Father. 6. And thus we see that in all this Gospel, Christ requirerh nothing else of them that be his, but saith,

The exposition of this Gospel.

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IN the begining of this Gospell Christ declareth wherefore he came, and what Office he executeth, which is properly the preaching of the Gospell: to wit, that he is he which prepareth dwelling places with the Father, and will when he cometh againe, receive us unto himself. Moreover he saith, that he is the way, the truth, and the life, which he afterward more plainly expresth when he saith: *No man cometh unto the Father but by me.* Also when he saith: *If ye had knowne me, ye should have known my Father also.* Hereunto moreover pertaineth that which he saith unto Philip: *He that hath seen me, hath seen my Father.* This is the chief and the greatest thing in this Gospell, unto which all are to be referred. Hereof we ought to learne, that we are not justified by our own strength, neither saved by our own merits, but are sanctified by the spirit of Christ, and saved by grace, and that Christ is the way leading to salvation. We will discusse and examine this Gospell throughout, God shall give us grace. These words the Lord spake unto his Disciples after his Supper, when he was now about to depart from them. Forasmuch as he had said many things unto them of his departure and passion, they were after a sort troubled and terrified, wherefore the Lord beginneth lovingly to comfort them, saying: *Let not your heart be troubled.* As if he would say: I perceive that my departure doth grieve you, and that ye are therefore troubled: But seeing it can not be otherwise, be not discomfited, there is no cause why ye should therefore be troubled, I will come againe unto you. Notwithstanding ye shall see many things in me before, whereat ye will be offended, they shall crucifie me, and unworthily handle me. But be not ye troubled because of these things, be not afraid, it will be better shortly after, the will of the Father is such. Howbeit flesh cannot doe otherwise but be offended, if it seeth Christ to be crucified, it by and by revolteth from him, it beleeveeth him not, neither counteth him for a Saviour. Which also it doth, when it seeth holy men suffer persecution, to be afflicted and tormented; for then it thinketh that God hath no care of them. Against this offence Christ aforesaid confirmeth his Disciples, and saith: *Ye beleeve in God, beleeve also in me.* That is, ye believe that God loveth you, and will glorifie you, beleeve that he will doe it after that sort, that ye see me glorified, and beleeve that this my death is life, to the glorifying both of me, and of my whole body, that is, of all Christians, and that this death satisfieth for the sins of the world, as the Apostles afterward witnessed of him in their writings. Thus Iohn saith 1. Iohn 2. 2. *Christ is the reconciliation for our finnes: and not for ours only, but also for the finnes of the whole world.* Wherefore thou seest that Christ here will have hearts confirmed by faith, and by no other outward thing. He saith moreover: *In my Fathers house are many dwelling places.* These dwelling places have been prepared

prepared from everlasting, neither is there any need that they should be prepared of him. Why therefore doth he say: *I goe to prepare a place for you?* This is nothing else but that he goeth and is made Lord of all, whereby he may prepare us unto such dwelling places. For as long as we are not prepared, neither are the dwelling places prepared for us, although they be ready by themselves. Wherefore Christ meaneth thus much: There are dwelling places, but not yet prepared rightly and as they must be. Howbeit then shall they be rightly prepared and appointed, when as I have taken away the kingdom of death by my death, and am now gone to reigne, and that by the holy Ghost: which by faith shall prepare and wholly make ready you also unto such dwelling places. So that this is the simple and plain meaning of these words: There are dwelling places, to wit, where the Father glorifieth, but those dwelling places are not yet prepared, for that the kingdom of death is not yet taken away. This Christ signifieth when he saith: *If it were not so I would have told you: I goe to prepare a place for you. And if I goe to prepare a place for you, I will come againe, and receive you unto my selfe, that where I am, there may ye be also.* In these words the Lord declareth how these dwelling places be prepared, namely, by the death of Christ as it is said, by which he came unto glory, and ruleth over all things, which are in heaven and earth. By which death he hath obtained the holy Ghost for us, which as is before said, may prepare us unto these dwelling places. For through his operation and working in us, he maketh us beleeve the Gospel, by which beleeving or faith we are prepared. Which could not be done if Christ should not depart and dye, and so possesse a kingdom over all. This therefore is the summe of this text: They are foreseen, whom the Father will glorifie, but they cannot be glorified but by Christ, who unlesse he take away death and sinne, all shall be in vaine. Here thou seest that all tend unto this, that Christ is he which prepareth the dwelling places, and that we cannot be glorified but by Christ, so that the whole drift of this text is, that we are not justified by mans strength, nor by our own merites, but by Christ, which the whole Epistle to the *Romans* effectually declareth, as also that which is written to the *Galathians*, and almost all that *Paul* doth in his Epistles, tendeth to the same end. It followeth moreover: *And whether I goe ye know, and the way ye know.* For ye beleeve in me, and have shewed signes in my name, whereby ye ought now to be certaine who I am, and what I do, and wherfore I am come. Ye have also seen and heard the testimonie of the Father of mee. Wherefore ye may now know that the Father will glorifie me, and beleeve that I and the father are one, it should be therefore superfluous to speak more of these things. But the Disciples, albeit they were well instructed of the Lord himself, and had seen his miracles, yet and they themselves

themselves also had preached the Gospel and wrought miracles, were notwithstanding as yet somewhat grosse in understanding, neither did they perceive whereof he here spake, and what was that way, and whether the Lord did prepare to depart. Wherefore *Thomas* bursteth forth into open words and confesseth freely, that he is ignorant hereof, and saith thus unto the Lord: *Lord we know not whether thou goest: how can we then know the way?* Here ye heare and see, that albeir there was faith in the Disciples, notwithstanding they were not as yet perswaded that Christ should be crucified, and by his death should enter into his kingdome, and that the same kingdome should be spirituall, which they did not understand even after the resurrection of the Lord: *Lord, say they, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdome to Israel?* Act. 1. 6. Those good men were as yet perswaded, that it should be a carnal & worldly kingdome. Such grosse things may here & there be found in the Gospels, by means whereof the Disciples did sometime notably stumble and erre. All which were committed to writing, for our comfort and confirmation, that we should not be by and by discouraged, when we have sometime stumbled in faith, and cannot at the first apply ourselves to the workes and word of the Lord. If this hapned to these great men, which afterward should become pillars of Christianity, there is no cause truly that any should marvell, if we also sometime faint in faith, yea, & let no man be afraid, although it falleth out that sometime through infirmities he so do. It is the work and matter of the Lord, he will amend these things when it seemeth good unto him.

Now of the words we mind to intreat somewhat at large. Not much before, when Christ would confirme his Disciples in faith, he promised them that they should be glorified. Here he addeth and declareth how and by what meanes they must be glorified, affirming that what must be by his departure, that is, by his death, and that by that meane he must obtaine his kingdome. This he hath often repeated unto them, so that now it did become them to know and understand it. Therefore he saith: *Whether I goe ye know, and the way ye know,* but they did not yet thoroughly understand it, as the words of *Thomas* doe declare. Now, it is certaine that there was faith in the Disciples, which the words of *Peter* prove, who answered Christ in stead of the rest, when he asked them, whether they also would goe away: *Peter* said: *Master to whom shall we goe? Thou hast the words of eternall life: and we beleewe and know that thou art Christ the Sonne of the living God.* Iohn 6. 68. This appeareth also by the words of the Lord, which he had said to them a little before at his supper: *Ye are cleane,* which hee would not have said, if they had not beleaved: they knew Christ therefore that he is the way to the Father. So they knew the Father also, for that they had seen the miracles whereby he gave testimony of the Sonne, and had heard the voice of the Father from heaven: *This is*

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my beloved Sonne in whom I am well pleaſed, beare him. All theſe things did greatly increaſe faith in the Diſciples hearts, notwithstanding they did not yet underſtand, what they ſhould doe, and what end concerning the matters of Chriſt was to be hoped for. Set before you an example hercof in *Abraham*. Although in faith a ſonne was conceived unto him, nevertheleſſe he was yet ignorant, that he muſt be offered: Neither did faith manifeſtly ſhew it ſelf, when a ſonne was given unto him. So was it alſo with the Diſciples: although they had faith, notwithstanding they wanted as yet tryall of their faith: Now nothing trieth faith better then the croſſe and perſecution. If *Abraham* had not been commanded to offer his ſonne, he had had no tryall of his faith. When as the Apoſtles did ſuffer perſecution, they then had a taſt and tryall of their faith. As long as we may live without temptation, we think that we are indued with a ſtrong faith, but if any adverſitie cometh to us on any ſide, we by and by trie what faith we reſted upon. Wherefore *S. Paul* ſaith *Rom. 5. We reioyce in tribulation, knowing that tribulation bringeth forth patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not aſhamed.* After the ſame ſort *Salomon* alſo ſaith in the Proverbs: *As ſilver is fined, and gold tried in the furnace, ſo doth the Lord trie the hearts.* Such a tryall is made by the croſſe and perſecution, when we are as it were crucified according to our old *Adam*, by which crucifying our faith is tried, and according to this tryall of faith our fleſh mortified, the ſpirit encreasing in the knowledge of Chriſt. And then is our fleſh truly mortified, when we ſuffer the will of God to beare rule in us, which is then done when we ſubmit our ſelves to his will howſoever he dealeth with us, renouncing our own. This *S. Paul* will have us to doe, when he ſaith thus, *Rom. 12. I beſeech you brethren by the mercies of God, that ye give up your bodies a living ſacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reaſonable ſerving of God. And ſhew not your ſelves like unto this world, but be ye changed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God is.* When *Thomas* thus confeſſeth that he is ignorant whether the Lord goeth, neither knoweth the way, the Lord doth not rebuke him with a ſterne countenance, neither by and by caſteth him off, nor driveth him from him, he calleth him not either a groſſe aſſe or oxe, as we are wont to handle the weake, but answering him very gently, ſaith: *I am the way, the truth, and the life.* I ſaith the Lord, am the way, by which the father is gone unto, albeit I be ſlain: I carry them that believe and are my ſheep, on my ſhoulders to the Father: no other way beſide this leadeth unto heaven. He that walketh not this way, goeth out of the way from the Father: I alſo am the truth. For I am the light which lighteth the world, and I teach true doctrine, and make true Chri-

tians. Moreover, I also am the life, for it is I that quicken, he that beleeueth in me shall not dye. This, as I said before, is to teach the Gospel, rightly, that is, to shew the true and right way, which leadeth unto eternall life. When the Disciples knew not the way that leadeth unto glory, the Lord making no delay, affirmeth unto them that he is that way. As if he should say: *If ye desire to know the way to glory, seek not the strength, light, and righteousness of creatures, but looke unto me: for I am the way, the truth and the life, although I must bee put to death, although I am vile and of no reputation according to the outward appearance: neither let this offend you, that they which bee mine, are subject to persecutions. The right way to the father is found in me, let none remove you from this perswasion. Therefore he saith* moreover. *No man commeth unto the Father but by me.* As if he should say: *No man can come to the Father by his own strength or merits: The law terrifieth the conscience that it cannot goe to the Father: the word of Christ, which justifieth us by the righteousness of Christ, bringeth us to the Father. Whereupon followeth that which he afterward saith: If ye had known me ye should have known my Father also.* For as no man commeth to the Father, but by the Sonne, so no man knoweth the Father but by Christ the Sonne. First the Fathers will is not known, to wit, that he will save us, unlesse we see it in Christ. He which is in the bosom of the Father, hath revealed it unto us. Secondly the Father is not beleeved, for reason by it self doth not understand, that it receiveth any thing of God. Wherefore it is needfull that Christ declare that bountifullnes and goodnes unto us. A troubled conscience flieth the Father, neither can it abide to commit it self unto him. But they that are justified by the word of Christ, do not any more contemne the Father neither flie him, as the *Israhelites* did, but stand before him as *Moses*, and are inlightened with divine light, that they may know the power of God and mercie of the Father. Hereupon commeth trust and confidence in him: hereby we know that we receive all things at his hands, and looke for all as well spirituall as corporall things of him. All these we must acknowledge to be received by faith, reason cannot attaine unto them. For it indeavoureth to obtaine God by her own strength and merits, but that endeavour is in vaine. Wherefore when it is not able to come to the knowledge of God by her own strength, it utterly denyeth God, and saith that there is no God. After when it seeth uncleannesse in her workes, it dispaireth, and is in most great distresse. But when we are justified by foolish preaching, we come to the knowledge of God the Father, as soon as we beleeve the word of Christ, and so we trie the power of the Father in afflictions and adversities, although they be even great. This was shadowed forth in that, that the people of *Israel* could not abide to heare

heare the voice of God, but desired that *Moses* might speake unto them. Where Christ also was figured, that he should make intercession for us to the Father, and be our mercy seat. For nature is more weak and fraile, then that it can abide to talke with God. Wherefore he hath given unto us this his Sonne a Mediatour, in whom and by whom we must have to doe with him. When as the Lord so lovingly and gently dealeth with *Thomas*, and sheweth unto him, how he must come to the Father, to wit, by the Sonne, and that the Father is known in the Sonne, there doth yet happen a grosser thing in *Philip*, who bursteth forth and will not be content with faith, but will know the thing assuredly by feeling and seeing. Wherefore he saith unto the Lord

*Lord shew us thy father and it sufficeth us.* As though he would say, if thou wilt also shew unto us a signe, then will we beleve. *Philip* counteth it not sufficient to beleve the word, but goeth about to come to the knowledge of the Father by another meanes then by the word. For seeing that reason cannot beleve, he requesteth to be certified by another meanes and way. By the interrogation therefore of Christ that followeth it is shewed, that the conscience is made certaine and quiet by no other thing, then by faith, for that we must cleave to the bare word, and look for no other signe. But *Philip* thought here that he should be much more certified, if he did see the Father, then if he beleved the simple and bare word. This incredulity Christ reproveth somewhat sharply, and saith. *Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known me?* As though he should say: I teach and preach, and yet thou knowest me not. Dost thou not know that the Father will be known by me, that my word is the word and power of the Father, by which alone he will be known, and by nothing else? For thou hast heard the voice of the Father from heaven after this sort: *This is my beloved Sonne, in whom I am well pleased, heare him.* Dost thou not yet understand how the Father is known? The Father is not seen with carnall eyes, as *Iohn* in his first chapter saith. *Iohn 1. 18, No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Sonne, which is in the bosome of the Father, he hath declared him.* Wherefore the Lord saith to *Philip*. *Philip, he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.* This saying is like unto that former when he saith: *If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.* That is, forasmuch as the Father will be known by me, seek no other way to know him, but beleve my word that I am he, which sheweth unto you the Father, and will make you to know him in me. Beleve that by methou hast access to the Father, by this meanes thou shalt know the Father, by faith thou shalt understand the power and mercy of the Father, and shalt feele him to be comfortable and gracious. The Father will have my word to be beleved, and them that beleve it, to be saved and obtain eternall life.

Seeing



Seeing therefore that these things be thus, that we cannot know the Father but in the Sonne, and when we know the Sonne, we know also the Father: the Lord saith moreover unto Philip: *How then sayest thou: Shew us the Father? Beleevest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?* As if he would say: Forasmuch as there is no other way to know the Father, but that which I have shewed, why I pray thee, dost thou not beleeve my words, seeing that I have taught that I am the way, the truth, and the life? Dost thou not beleeve that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? Beleevest thou not that my divinitie, and the divinitie of my Father is one? And that the Father will be known by me? But why is the Father known by the knowledge of the Sonne? even therefore, for that the Sonne is in the Father, and the Father in the Sonne. For the word by which the Sonne is known, is the power of the Sonne and of the Father. Wherefore seeing the Sonne is knowne by his word, it necessarily followeth, that the Father also is known thereby. *Beleeve me, that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me: at the least beleeve me for the very works sake.* Here he doth as it were appeale to workes, that they may give testimony of the word. As if he should say: Seeing that ye cannot be content to beleeve the word, at the least beleeve the signes which beare witnes of the word, and whereby the Father hath given testimonie of me. For the workes and signs are testimonies of the word. By these words Christ meaneth nothing else but to confirm the consciences of his Disciples, and of all us against the offence of the crosse. For consciences will know and not beleeve the bare words of God, but doe alwayes doubt and say: What if God careth not for thee? and have such like cogitations. Holy and godly men seeme for the most part to be neglected, as abjects and most contemptible men, inasmuch as the world according to the wil & lust thereof, rageth and practiseth tyranny against them, and doth almost what it list. Hereupon they are in anguish and in danger of faith, and desire to know the will of God toward them. These Christ comforteth, that they may seek no other comfort but in him and in his death, and beleeve that he is life, that he beareth rule, and maketh alive them that be dead. And that they should nothing doubt hereof he maketh them yet more certain, and saith: *Verily, verily I say unto you, he that beleeveeth in me, the workes that I doe, he shall doe also, and greater then these shall he doe.* As if he should say. Doubt not any thing but that ye shall know the Father by me, and that my word is the power of God, and that by my word ye shall be sustained, although I be even crucified. Ye shall have triall hereof in your selves, for if ye beleeve in me, ye shall not only work such workes and shew such signes as I do, but even greater. Which came to passe after the ascension of Christ, when the

the Apostles wrought greater miracles as well among the Jewes as Gentiles, then Christ himself. But what is the cause hereof? The Lord himself addeth it saying: *For I go unto my Father.* That is, I will begin a Kingdom, where I will fulfill all things. Here the Lord annexeth the conclusion of all the questions and consolations going before. For a little before Christ had taught, that the Father is known by him, and that is because he is in the Father, he therefore is shewed by that word, by which the Father is shewed. But that ye might confirm this to wit, that his word is the power of the Father, he added and said: *He that beleeueth in me, the workes that I doe, he shall doe also.* That is, by faith in me ye also shall doe those workes, and know that my word is the vertue and power of God. But why doth he say: *I goe to the Father?* I answer. Because Christ is in the Father, therefore doth he the workes of the Father, but we doe them not also therefore, but for that Christ who is in the Father, is now in us. For to goe to the Father is to fulfill all things, and as *Paul* according to the saying of the Psalmes declareth, to give gifts unto men, to lighten and to sanctifie. For this is the kingdom of Christ, whereby he reigneth in earth, in the hearts of the believers, and sitteth upon the throne of his Father *David*. The Lord also speaketh these words: *I goe to the Father*, to comfort his Disciples. For as he did before begin to confirme them, that they should not be troubled and offended, although he should die, but courageously cleave to him, and beleeve in him: So here he promisseth them that they shall be glorified, for he goeth to the Father, who shall deliver all things into his hands, that he may mightily obtaine a Kingdome over all things that are in heaven and earth. Wherefore they ought nothing at all to feare. He yet comforteth them more and saith: *And whatsoever ye aske in my name I will doe.* As if he should say: As soone as I come to the Father, there is no cause why ye should be carefull. For those things that ye have neede of and aske, ye shall obtaine, I will doe this for you because I obtaine a kingdome. And he peculiarly addeth, *in my Name*, whereby he excludeth all our merites, for by Christ we are heard as also in Christ we are loved, by whom also we are Priests, as *Peter* saith, to offer up spirituall sacrifices, and acceptable to God. All these things saith Christ, I will doe for this cause. *That the Father may be glorified in the Sonne.* The Father is then glorified, when glory is given and ascribed unto him, not unto us. That is when we acknowledge that we are saved not by our own merites, not by our owne wisdom and righteousness, but do put our trust in his mercy. For he hath given his Sonne for our sinnes, and whatsoever we purpose to aske, we must aske it by this Son, and we shall obtaine it. Wherefore he repeateth these words, and saith. *If ye shall ask any thing in my Name I will doe it.* These words end to this end, that he might make us certainly

certainly beleve his words, and cleave unto him. This therefore is the summe of this conclusion: He biddeth his Disciples and us therefore beleve, for that he goeth to reign, before he affirmeth that he will shew forth a signe, and testimony of his Kingdom, and so reigne, that he will declare a notable token of his Government, that we may seele and perceive it, to wit, that he will doe so great workes by us, as he himself hath done, yea and greater also, also, that he will heare us when we pray and whatsoever we pray for unto the Father in his Name. By these promises the heart must be confirmed and made courageous against the Gates of Hell. For Christ reigneth by his word, wherefore it is needfull, that we exactly know the virtue of the word. For the Kingdom of Christ is the power and virtue of God. These things I thought good to intreat of concerning this Gospell, let us call upon God for the aid of his grace, that we may be able to understand them, and by them to strengthen our weak Faith. *Finis.*

An Admonition to the Christian Reader.

**F**OR the commendation of this work, and the Author thereof, there shall not need I trust at this present, any great discourse to be made. Forasmuch as so many good books of the same writer be already set abroad, wherby may sufficiently be conjectured what is to be thought of this also. Again because the work it self is such, concerning such matter of heavenly consolation, that without any further commendation of other, it yeeldeth cause sufficient to commend it self, only this then remaineth to intreat and exhort the Reader, but to peruse and read the same. Who in so doing shall find I doubt not, neither to lack great cause in us to set forth these Sermons, nor lesse necessity in the Reader, to bestow paines, in perusing and reading of them. For the dignity of the matter, and singular fruit therein to be found: For what more worthy matter can be, then to set forth Christ in his right glory, in his full riches and royall estate, to the hearts and soules of men, especially such as are heavy, laden, & distressed in spirit, what more comfortable hearing, or doctrine more true, then of forgiveness and remission of sins, so graciously purchased, so freely offered by our Saviour, so clearly preached by his Ministers? Or what riches more excellent, then faith fixed on Christ, and hope established in the promises of life? or what study more fruitfull, then to seek the kingdom of God? For where the fruit of all other studies decayeth and hath his end, the fruit of this study abideth for ever. And therefore not without cause, we bee so willed by our Saviour himself, first to seek for this Kingdom, and righteousness thereof, promising withall in another place, that he which seeketh shall find. In the seeking of which kingdom, two speciall notes we have to learn and search. First the glory and grace of the King, secondly the wealth and felicity of the Subjects. In which two parts as the whol sum of all our spirituall comfort most principally consisteth, ground  
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ded in the holy Scriptures: so of all expositors of the same Scriptures, I know none or few in these our dayes, more lively to open these comforts unto us, out of Gods word, then this Doctor and preacher of these Sermons here following, which as he hath done most effectually, first in his own tongue to his Country people, then in Latine to the Learned, so this Translator hath no lesse plainly, and faithfully Englished the same for the commodity and use of our English nation: By whose meanes and industry this vantage we have now gained, that we have gotten unto us one good Preacher more in England, then we had before, to the comfort and edification of all such as be disposed to read and learn. So that in such towns, and villages wherein before were mute Ministers, this preacher may now supply the lack, and there be received as their parson, if they please, preaching now in their own speech unto them, and putting them to no charges of any Tythes. And in other places, where more plenty of learned Teachers is, yet notwithstanding no hurt shall come to admit this Stanger as a Co-adjutator, or fellow helper unto them. Whereby I nothing doubt, but in so doing, all such as shall be willing to give eare to this Preacher, as well they that be learned, shall find wherein to grow in more perfection, as also the unlearned, wherein to be instructed sufficiently to their soules health in Christ Iesus. In whom I wish to thee, and to all true Christian Readers, all Spirituall grace, and heavenly wisdom, to blesse thy Studies, to prosper thy labour, to stablish thy faith, to multiply thy consolations, to direct thy wayes, and finally to glorifie thee both body and soule in his blessed kingdom for ever. Amen. *JF.*  
To the right worshipfull Sir Thomas Heneage Knight, Treasurer of her Majesties privie chamber, *W. Gace* wisheth peace and salvation in Christ.

**C**onsidering (right worshipfull) that saying of *David* alledged by the Apostle *Paul*, that there is none that understandeth, none that seeketh after God, that all are gone out of the way, and become unprofitable: methinks it doth lively set forth the blindnes of mans understanding, the wickednes of his will, and his perversnes and unability unto that which is good. Whereof if we had not many testimonies of Scripture, yet common experience were able to confirm the same, when we daily see men so careful to live, and so carelesse to live well. Howbeit this is no mervell: for as a tree whose roote is rotten and infected with venomous sap, bringeth forth none but corrupt and naughty fruit: so from mans heart which is corrupt and infected with the venom of sin, can proceed nothing that is good. Now mans understanding being blind, he is not able of himself to attain to the knowledge of God, and consequently without some other means or help cannot be saved: for this as our Saviour in the Gospel saith, is life everlasting to know one only true God, and him whom he hath sent Iesus Christ. Again, mans will being corrupt, he is not able to serve God as his duty requireth, as to honor him as his Lord, to obey him as his father, to trust in him as his protector and preserver, to be thankfull to him for his infinite benefits, &c. Wherefore lest man being ignorant of God should be excluded from salvation, or lest through the wickednes of his will and inclination to evil, he should dishonor so high a Lord, disobey so good a father, distrust so careful a preserver, and be unthankfull to so gracious a giver, who doth not see

Now requisite and needfull it is, that he should by good Instructions be  
 brought to the knowledge of the Lord God, and by godly exhortations and  
 admonitions, be reclaimed from his wicked waies to the performance of his  
 duty? Now forasmuch as God hath in his word revealed so much of himself  
 as is expedient for man to know, and hath therein also prescribed that man-  
 ner of serving him whereof he accepteth, man must out of it learn the true  
 knowledge and right service of God, and therefore most necessary it is that  
 this word be preached and taught, that thereby man may learn to know  
 God, and truly to worship and serve him being known. So shall his mind be  
 enlightened with divine knowledge, and his will reformed according to  
 Gods will, so shall this word be a lanterne unto his feet, and a light unto  
 his paths, whereby he may be directed in all his wayes. But (alas) this is a  
 thing to be lamented, that the harvest is great, but the labourers are few.  
 For among them which supply the places of labourers in the Lords harvest,  
 some there be who do with diligence discharge their duty, many more there  
 are, who albeit they be able, yet doe either quite neglect it, or very slender-  
 ly execute it, but greatest is the number of them, who for lack of skill and  
 knowledge are not able at all to perform it. Wherefore there is great need to  
 pray the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his  
 harvest, whereby many more then do, may receive the Gospel of Christ Jesus  
 even to the salvation of their soules. The premises well weighed, I thinke  
 (right Worshipfull) there may a sufficient reason be gathered, why I did  
 purpose the publishing of these Sermons of *D. Martin Luther* in our vulgar  
 tongue, and why at the last I have by some labour and paines brought the  
 said purposed publishing to passe. I was indeed at the first procured therunto  
 by a learned Father of this land, whose words and judgment I make no  
 small account of, but afterward entring into deeper consideration of the  
 matter, and weighing on the one side the great ignorance of many even in  
 matters of salvation, together with the daily dishonouring of God by un-  
 godly life, and on the other side the divine doctrine and most wholesom ex-  
 hortations which these Sermons containe, I was more forcibly stirred up  
 therunto, and thought that the painfull perusing of them, and fruitfull fol-  
 lowing of that whereof they entreat, would be a soveraign salve to help to  
 cure such dangerous diseases. For by them may they learn to know one only  
 true God, and whom he hath sent Jesus Christ, and the infinite riches  
 which are comprised in him, and offered unto us through him of God his  
 Father: that he humbled himself to exalt us, that he became a servant to set  
 us at liberty, that he was impoverished to make us rich, that he dyed for our  
 sins, and rose again for our justification, that through his means mercy hath  
 swallowed up miserie, and bounty hath overcome all evill, finally that with-  
 out him here is no joy nor consolation, no peace nor quietnesse, no felici-  
 ty nor salvation, but that he is the only means by which all good things are  
 attained: so that they which injoy him receive not one gift alone, as  
 with *Salomon* wisdom, with *Sampson* strength, with *Job* patience, with *Paul*  
 zeale, &c. but for poverty they receive riches, for weaknes strength, for foily  
 wisdom, for servitude freedom, for grief joy, for sin righteousness, for death  
 life

life, yea all good things whatsoever. Wherefore if the faithfull man be pressed with poverty, he may here learn that by Christ he is adopted to be the Son of God, and so may be comforted, saying to himself: How can he be poor which hath God to his Father? who both is able to give all things necessary, for his is the earth and all that therein is, and also will give the same because he is most loving and gracious to his children. Again, if he feel in himself weaknes, he may learn here that he is not able of himself to attain unto strength, but that it is the gift of Christ, who strengthneth such as beleve in him, and so may be stirred up by heartie prayer to ask the same of him, that he wil vouchsafe by his holy spirit to strengthen & confirm him that he may be able to perform that by grace, which by nature & of himself he shal never be able to do as mightily to subdue the rebellious flesh, strongly to resist, & at the last valiantly to overcome the tentations of Satan, patiently to bear the troubles of the world, and constantly to contemn the allurements of the same. Moreover, if he thirst after divine and heavenly wisdom, (which is to know God aright, and those things that are necessary to be known to the attaining of salvation) he may find here largely and lively set forth, that Christ came his Fathers Embassador and Messenger to men, that by him they might be brought to the right knowledge of God, and into all truth, so that by him we are enlightened with the knowledge of God, by him we are instructed in all truth, and consequently by him we obtain divine and heavenly wisdom. Here also shall he learn that Christ was made under the law, that he might redeem them which were in bondage under the law, and of servile bondmen make them free sonnes, even the children of God.

Furthermore, if grief and heavines come upon him, he is here taught where true joy may be had oven in Christ Iesus alone, that in him only he may find sure comfort, sovereign medicines, present remedy, true joy of heart and quietnes of conscience. Finally, whereas we are sinfull, and have by our finnes justly deserved Gods eternall wrath and most heavy vengeance, he shall here learne that Christ hath payed the rancome for our finnes, and pacified Gods most grievous wrath and displeasure justly conceived against us. And because it is not sufficient that due satisfaction be made for sins, and Gods wrath appeased, but we must also appeare righteous before God, it is here shewed, that as by one mans disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, namely of Iesus Christ, as many as beleve in him shall be made righteous, inasmuch as his righteousness is imputed to them as their own, whereby they appeare perfectly righteous before God and are accepted of him: so that whereas they had of themselves deserved eternall death, they are through Christ accounted worthy of everlasting life. But what doe I goe about to rehearse the infinite treasures which the faithfull enjoy through Christ? It shall be sufficient to conclude with the Apostle, and say: If God spared not his own Sonne, but gave him for us all to death, how shall he not with him give us all things also? Now forasmuch as these things and the right meanes to attain unto them, are in these Sermons of that most learned Divine *Martin Luther* most learnedly, yea even divinely set forth, they may undoubtedly be a singular meane, not only

instruct them which be ignorant in matters of saluation, but also to increase and confirm the knowledge of such, as have already well profited in Christian religion. Howbeit there is annexed hereunto sound and absolute doctrine concerning good workes and godly conversation, as being most necessary to be of all Christians perfectly known, & effectually followed. For Christians through Christ being become the Sonnes of God, how unmeet, yea how abominable a thing it is that they should resemble Satan in their doings? being now made the members of Christ, how detestable a thing is it that they should be instruments of iniquity? being now the Temple of the holy Ghost, how beastly a thing were it to defile the same with the filthines of sinne? Finally having received so many and so great benefits of God through Christ, how wicked and shamefull a thing should it be to be unthankfull to so gracious a God, to be disobedient to so loving a Father, in any wise to displease so merciful a Saviour? But it shall be needlesse much to stand upon this point, seeing it is not unknown to the faithfull with how great endeavour they ought to avoid that which is evill; and embrace that which is good, and therefore shall sincere and perfect doctrine concerning good workes to be unto them no lesse commodious and profitable, then needfull and necessary. For the causes above specified especially among other, I have (right Worshipfull) though not finely, yet faithfully translated these Sermons into our vulgar tongue, and have done mine endeavour for the publishing of the same, which I do humbly dedicate to your Worships protection, by your zealous godlines, & godly zeal chiefly moved therunto, whereby I am induced to think that you will well accept of them. For as the godly doe with *David* delight in the Arke of the Covenant, in the Tabernacle of the Lord, in the holy Mount *Sion*, that is, in the Church of God: so doe they with the same *David* desire the building of the house of God, the flourishing of this vine, the peace and prosperitie of this heavenly Hierusalem, and therefore that which is a mean and furtherance hereunto, they doe not only love and like, but also highly esteem, and heartily pray for. Wherefore (right Worshipfull) I think it altogether superfluous to goe about with words, to procure your well liking and accepting of these Sermons, forasmuch as they tend only to this end, that the Church of God may by them be edified, as in the premisses is of me declared. Whereas in translating them I have used a plain kind of stile (yet such as sufficiently expresse the meaning of the author) and not studied for curious words & eloquent phrases, the cause thereof is, for that I prefer plainnes with profit, before much curiosity with smaller commoditie, so that I nothing at all feare that in this respect they shall be misliked of the Godly, whose misliking only I endeavour to avoid. Thus (as it seems unto me) having intreated sufficiently of those things which I thought pertinent to my present purpose, I doe here conclude, desiring the Lord God, that he wil by his holy Spirit alwaies govern and direct you in the true obedience of his blessed word, to the glory of his divin name, to the profit of your neighbours, and comfort of your conscience, so shall you assuredly have prosperous successe in all your affaires, and at the last obtain everlasting ioyes and endlesse felicity, by the only means of Christ *Iesus* our Saviour. Your Worships humbly at commandment W. Gace.